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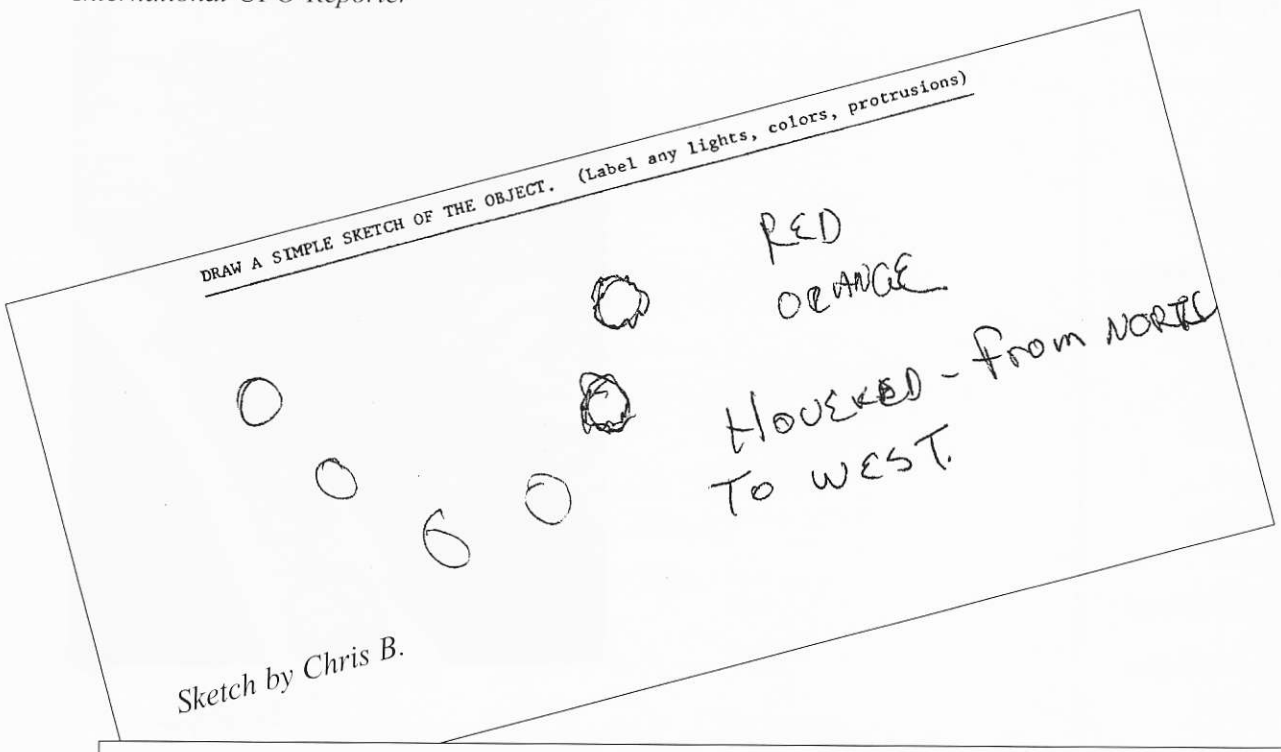
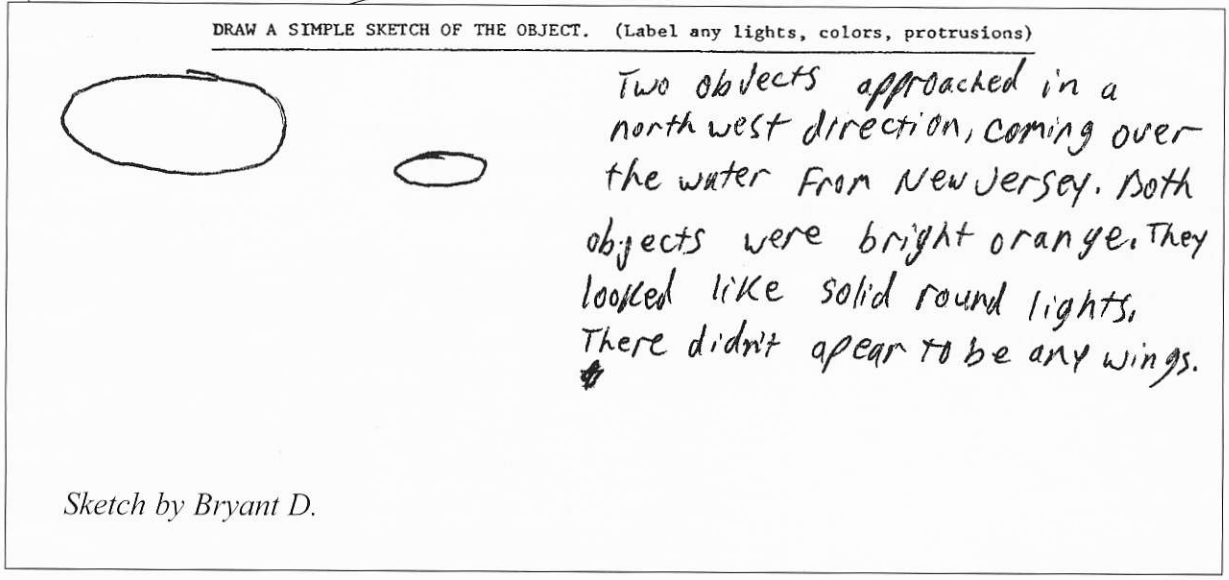


Sketch by Chris B.


DRAW A SIMPLE SKETCH OF THE OBJECT. (Label any lights, colors, protrusions)
Two objects approached in a northwest direction, coming over the water from New Jersey. Both objects were bright orange. They looked like solid round lights. There didn't apear to be any wings.

Sketch by Bryant D.

THE ARTHUR KILL SIGHTINGS: STATEN ISLAND

INTERNATIONAL UFO REPORTER

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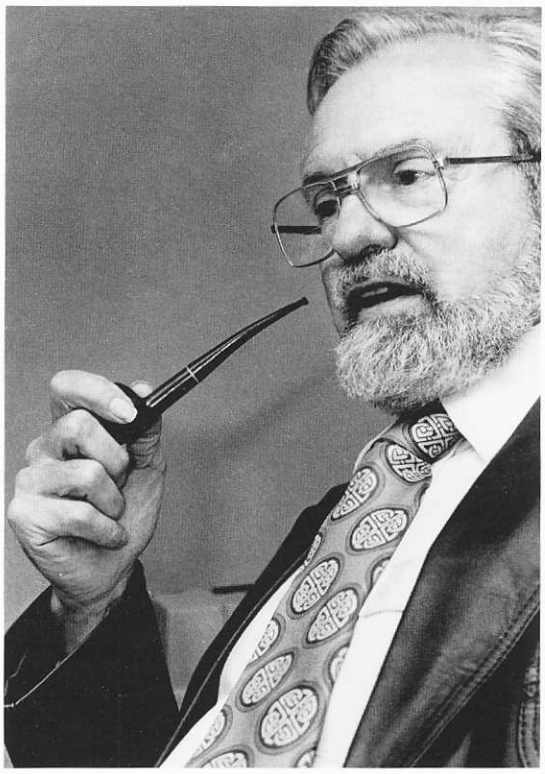

J. Allen Hynek
1910-1986

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The Arthur Kill sightings, July 14–15, 2001

BY DENNIS K. ANDERSON

Staten Island, the southernmost borough of New York City, hugs the New Jersey coastline separated only by the narrow Arthur Kill waterway, named by the Dutch in the 1600s. Arthur Kill is roughly 12 miles in length and varies in width from one-eighth to one mile. The channel is 30–40 feet deep to accommodate large oil tankers that arrive from all over the world to load or unload at the oil refining operations peppering the New Jersey shoreline. A short distance north is Fresh Kills Landfill, often dubbed "The World's Largest Garbage Dump," although it is now closed.

Around midnight on July 14–15, 2001, many witnesses on both the New York and New Jersey side of Arthur Kill had a spectacular UFO sighting. Others have called the sightings "The Carteret Lights," since most media accounts of the phenomenon quote witnesses from the Carteret, New Jersey, area, which is across the waterway from Staten Island. However, I will refer to them as the Arthur Kill lights in this article. The lights, as best as can be determined, were actually above the waterway. In Staten Island, all witnesses viewed the lights from along one of two roadways: Arthur Kill Road, whose twisting curves follow the entire length of Staten Island; or the West Shore Expressway. Both run parallel to the waterway.

Curious lights in the sky

Ironically, on the night of Saturday, July 14, 2001, I hosted the second of a three-part summer series of UFO lectures at Wagner College. The speaker concluded his lecture earlier than expected. If this had not happened or I had been delayed in leaving the lecture hall for any reason, I would have witnessed the aerial event myself. I regularly take the West Shore Expressway home from work. But, as luck or fate would have it, I was not delayed. Instead, I was home sleeping only a few miles from where a rare and significant UFO sighting in a dense urban area was occurring.

I first learned of the strange lights on Monday morning July 16. My father regularly has trouble sleeping and listens to the radio into the early morning hours. As I prepared to leave for work that morning, he informed me that WCBS News Radio 88 was broadcasting a report of weird lights having been spotted over New Jersey and the "garbage dump." On my way to work I heard the news on my car radio. The report was sketchy at best. Witnesses reported seeing lights of an orange-red color.

Over the years, I have come to realize the average person has very little astronomical knowledge. I have received calls from excited people describing a bright, hovering object in the sky. Usually after asking a few simple questions about time, direction and appearance, it generally

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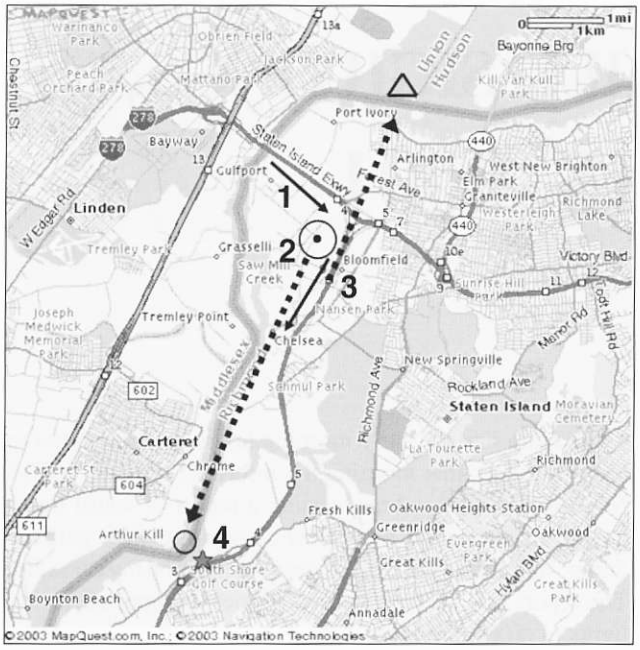
AKA THE CARTERET SIGHTINGS

The Arthur Kill sightings are better known as the Carteret sightings, and they received a fair amount of publicity in the New Jersey/New York area at the time, and on various UFO reporting sites. The National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDS) in Las Vegas also conducted a separate investigation of the incident. Their report can be viewed on the Internet at www.nidsci.org/news/newjersey_contents.html.

NIDS obtained radar data from the FAA for the area of the sighting, and voice tapes from Newark International Airport. To quote their analysis of the radar data:

"By far the most noteworthy aspect of this communication is the large number of objects detected that DO NOT have transponders (all commercial aircraft have transponders) in the airspace around Newark International at the same time that an estimated seventy eyewitnesses on the New Jersey Turnpike and a further fifty (estimated) witnesses from Staten Island reported unidentified lights in the same area of sky.

"A request to randomly check for aircraft without transponders at the same time on a DIFFERENT night produced the result that there were no objects without transponders in the air around Newark International airport on that second, randomly chosen, night. This 'control' study lends support to the notion that such a large profusion of objects without transponders in the air around one of the busiest international airports in the world is unusual." —*Mark Rodeghier, CUFOS*



Map of the Arthur Kill sighting area. (1) The solid black arrow is Carol and Jaimie's path in the car; they were looking south along the broken arrow. (2) The circle is the sportsman's club at 170 Bloomfield Avenue; the broken arrow pointing south was also Adam's line of sight. (3) The broken arrow pointing north along the West Shore Expressway was John R.'s line of sight to the yellow, triangular light heading north. (4) The star at the bottom is the Waterloo Café.

turns out to be Jupiter, Venus, or a bright star. The lights over the Arthur Kill turned my thoughts to the planet Mars and the star Alpha Scorpii, the brightest in the constellation of Scorpius. The ancient Greeks named the star Antares, meaning the rival of Mars, because of its orange-red color.

That summer, Mars and Antares were in close proximity in the southern sky. Newscasts did not give a time for the sighting, but the constellation Scorpius always lies close to the horizon from the latitude of Staten Island. This would have placed the planet and star at approximately 25 degrees above the horizon. An astronomical object seen less than 30 degrees over the horizon is subject to twinkling effects—scintillation—caused by atmospheric pollution and turbulence. The untrained observer could easily mistake the pair for something strange.

This however, did not stop me from investigating further. I decided to call the *Staten Island Advance*, the local newspaper, to see if they had received any UFO reports. Reporters from the newspaper have consulted me on many occasions concerning astronomical events and UFO phenomena. Unfortunately, they had not heard about the sightings. An Internet search of New Jersey newspapers disclosed more information. On the local New York television newscasts that evening, nearly every channel had interviews with witnesses and a video clip taken by a Carteret, New Jersey, resident.

At this point, my planet and star scenario was no longer viable. When shown in a wide-angle view, the video reminded me of the footage taken by Bob Pozzuoli on July 24, 1984, at 10:20 p.m. in Brewster, New York, during the Hudson Valley boomerang wave. This footage, however, probably due to camcorder technology improvements over the years, was far sharper and clearer. Sixteen to twenty lights were seen in formation. The video showed a trapezoidal grouping of lights followed by a single light bringing up the rear; according to the New Jersey witnesses, the lights formed various patterns, including circular, diamond, V-shaped, and three straight lines. Some thought it resembled the Big Dipper. One person said a couple of the lights zipped across the sky.

Despite the credible and sincere comments made by the eyewitnesses, the media naturally chose to introduce the "giggle factor." News commentators quipped, "Call Steven Spielberg," "Must be birds with flashlights," and "Get the Doppler 400 [weather radar] on it." Someone at the Carteret police department with too much time on his hands printed up alien wanted posters complete with a little green man, which every newscast proudly displayed. Something not immediately recognizable had penetrated the airspace over volatile oil refining facilities and invaded one of the most heavily trafficked commercial air corridors in the world. Personally, I couldn't find the humor in it.

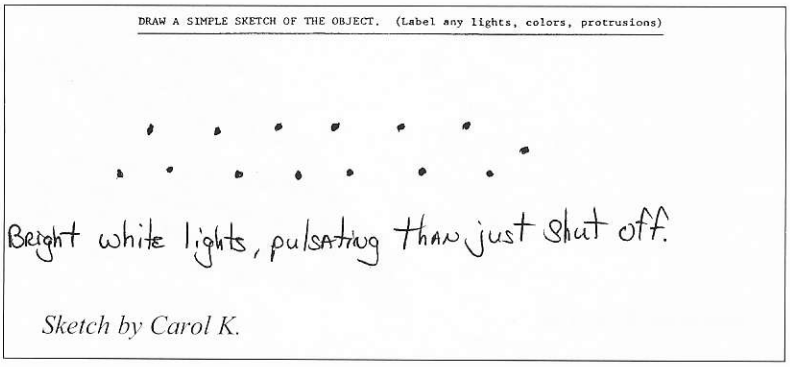
The Staten Island perspective

On July 18, an article in the *Advance* encouraged residents to contact me at my office with sighting information. It had occurred to me that although an investigation was being conducted in New Jersey, no one was talking to witnesses on the New York side of the waterway. This seemed odd to me, so I took on the job myself. Those who saw or read the contemporary media accounts may be surprised to learn that many Staten Islanders viewed the phenomenon. Most of the observations were of nocturnal lights, similar to the configurations viewed from New Jersey. However, one group of witnesses had a sighting at fairly close range. The following is a synopsis of what was reported pertaining to the mystery lights of July 14–15, 2001.

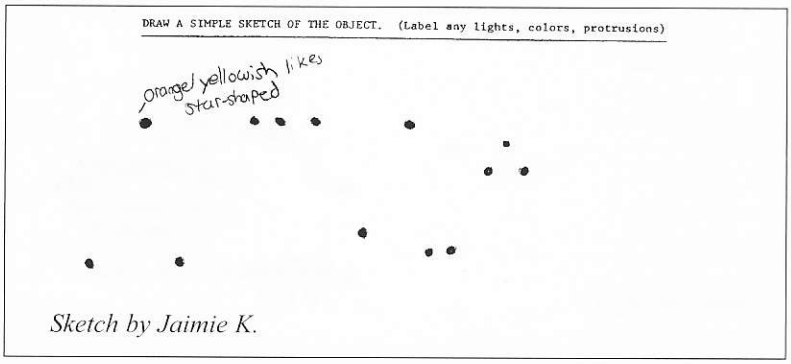
As background to the sightings, the weather that night was beautiful. There were no clouds in the sky, and the wind was calm.

Carol K., 47, who works as a secretary, was driving with her daughter Jaimie, who was 16. They were returning from upstate New York via New Jersey. As their car approached the tollbooths on the Staten Island side of the Goethals Bridge, Jaimie was staring south out of the passenger window. In the distance, she suddenly saw 12 to 14 yellow-orange lights appear in the sky above the Fresh Kills Landfill. At first she thought they were stars. They appeared stationary at first, then began to switch positions and move back and forth. Individual lights would appear to "dim for a second then brighten again, continuing to move about." At this time she informed her mother about the unusual sight.

Carol was just as puzzled as her daughter. Leaving the toll plaza, they proceeded south on the West Shore Expressway with the lights still visible. Carol described the phenomena as bright white, pulsating starlike lights in an oblong (horizontal) pattern (note the similarity in the drawings done by these two witnesses). They were not moving, but after driving approximately two-and-a-half miles the lights began to "turn off." Jaimie indicated the lights went out within two or three seconds of one another until only one remained. This light proceeded to move back and forth, then disappeared. The pair continued driving home and did not see the lights again. The total duration of their sighting was estimated to be five or six minutes. The lights were approximately 45 degrees above the horizon in the southwestern sky. Neither witness checked the time, but thought it was approximately 12:50–1:15 a.m. No sound was heard.

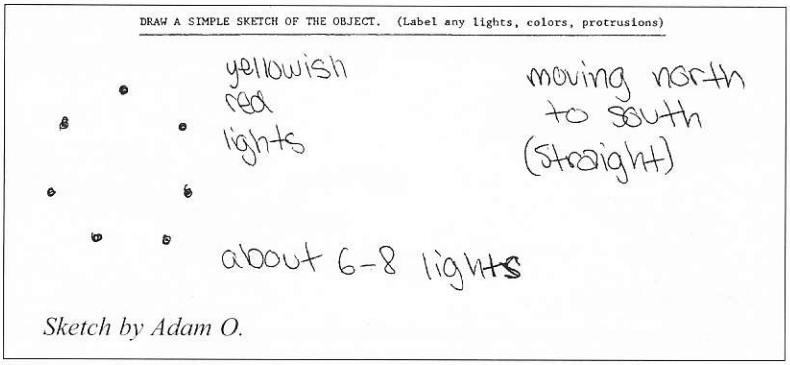

DRAW A SIMPLE SKETCH OF THE OBJECT. (Label any lights, colors, protrusions)
Bright white lights, pulsating than just shut off.

Sketch by Carol K.



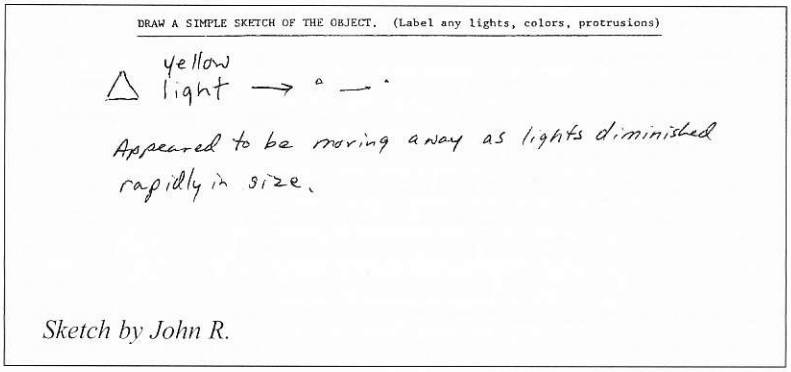
Sketch by Jaimie K.

Adam O., 15, was attending the birthday party of his sister's boyfriend at a sportsman's club. He viewed a formation of six to eight yellowish-red lights in a circular or oval pattern. A friend noticed the lights and brought them to his attention. Adam initially thought they were aircraft navigation lights. All the lights moved slowly at the same speed, in a north to south direction. The lights were 45 degrees above the horizon. Adam drew a sketch of what he saw, a circle with lights on the outer edge, equally spaced. For clarity, I asked if the lights seemed to be attached to a structured object. He indicated they did not, crossed out his original sketch, and drew another that eliminated the circle. He believed the lights were solid and pulsating. He watched for only a minute or two then turned his attention back to the party. He never heard a sound, and thought the time to be 11:45 p.m. Adam came to my office accompanied by his mother. He was very sincere and appeared interested in being helpful and accurate.



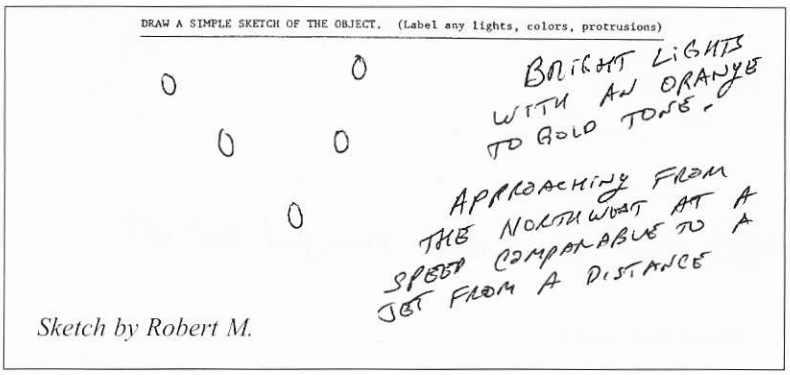
Sketch by Adam O.

John R., 51, a computer programmer, was driving north on the West Shore Expressway at about 12:30 a.m. when he noticed a single, large, yellow, triangular-shaped light. It was glowing and he believed it to be solid. The object was directly in front of him, high in the sky, at about 45 degrees above the horizon. John stated "the object was as bright as the moon, but about one-third its size." It remained this size for approximately two minutes and then rapidly diminished until it was no longer in sight. In John's words, "it gave the appearance of moving away from the earth." The triangle moved north directly away from the witness. This would indicate the light traveled in the general direction of Newark International Airport. John estimated the total duration of the sighting at three minutes. He stressed the fact that traffic was very light, mostly in the opposite direction.

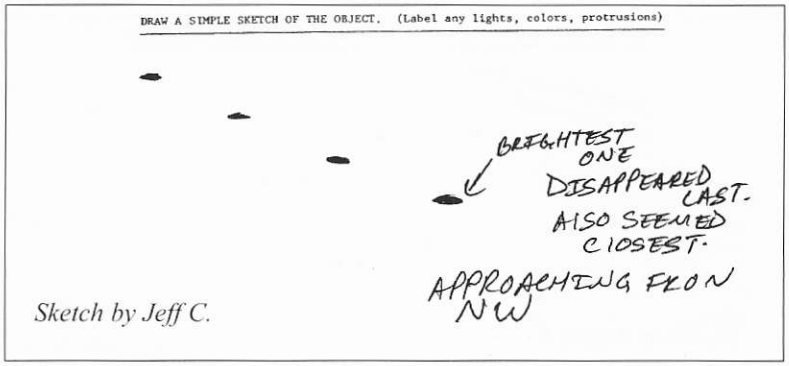

DRAW A SIMPLE SKETCH OF THE OBJECT. (Label any lights, colors, protrusions)
yellow
light
Appeared to be moving away as lights diminished
rapidly in size.

Sketch by John R.

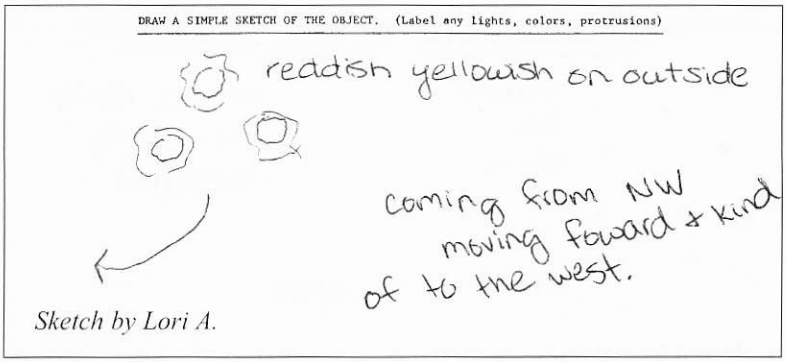
The most significant sighting was from the Waterloo Café on Arthur Kill Road, located at a point opposite Carteret, New Jersey. Directly across the street from the café, the Blazing Star Burial Ground, a small historic


DRAW A SIMPLE SKETCH OF THE OBJECT. (Label any lights, colors, protrusions)
BRIGHT LIGHTS WITH AN ORANGE TO GOLD TONE.
APPROACHING FROM THE NORTHWEST AT A SPEED COMPARABLE TO A JET FROM A DISTANCE

Sketch by Robert M.


DRAW A SIMPLE SKETCH OF THE OBJECT. (Label any lights, colors, protrusions)
BRIGHTEST ONE DISAPPEARED LAST. ALSO SEEMED CLOSEST.
APPROACHING FROM NW

Sketch by Jeff C.


DRAW A SIMPLE SKETCH OF THE OBJECT. (Label any lights, colors, protrusions)
reddish yellowish on outside
coming from NW moving foward & kind of to the west.

Sketch by Lori A.

cemetery in Rossville dating from the Revolutionary War era, lies between the eatery and the shoreline. *Chris B.*, 35, the owner, was standing on the front porch getting a breath of fresh air when he spotted a group of lights approaching from the northwest. The lights were in a V-formation (see cover). When I questioned him about the exact color, Chris pointed to an orange-red light that was part of a multicolored lighting display above the bar area. He didn't recall if there were five or six lights. Each light was well-defined with a sharp, distinct edge. The phenomenon must have been relatively low, because the cemetery and the roadway were bathed in an eerie reddish-orange glow. To Chris, the lights first appeared to be part of a single object. However, he changed his mind and recollected each light as being an individual solid object that he felt was about 50 feet across. The lights could have been hovering silently above and beyond the cemetery tree line for about five minutes.

Robert M., a federal law-enforcement officer, was standing inside the front door of the café when the lights were brought to his attention. He described them as bright lights with an orange to gold tone, in V-configuration, approaching from the northwest. Looking like jets in formation, they appeared to be moving at the same speed and were separated by 150–200 feet. Robert believed the lights to be ½-mile away. As he watched, the lights began to go out as if someone was flipping off a light switch. The last light to disappear was the brightest. Robert noted that everyone who witnessed the event was amazed—there were many witnesses—and couldn't believe what they had observed. He phoned Channel 7 Eyewitness News to report the sighting. They listened and promptly hung up.

Jeff C., the café's DJ, was summoned outside to take a look. He saw four lights in an "angle" formation. I believe that in the military this is called reverse echelon, with the closest light being the lowest and brightest. He described the color as being more amber, "like a car's turn signal." His first impression was that he was seeing a flight of military aircraft. He thought the lights were about 45 degrees above the horizon, and about 2,000–3,000 feet distant. He estimated them to be one-quarter the size of the moon and equally bright. As he watched the lights disappear one by one, he no longer thought he was viewing an explainable event.

Lori A., the bartender, saw three reddish lights that were surrounded by a weird yellowish glow. She described the configuration as an inverted V-shaped formation that was gliding or floating. Lori was the only witness who thought the lights were fuzzy at the edges. In Lori's estimation, the phenomenon appeared to be very close, about 500 feet away and 1,000 feet in altitude. The lights seemed to be half the size of the moon.

Bryant D., the security person, was checking IDs at the rear of the café when he noticed activity at the front of the establishment. Chris B. informed him that there were UFOs out front. At first he thought his boss was playing a practical joke on him, so he didn't pay much attention to the statement. When he noticed a large crowd gathering, he decided to have a look. Bryant was amazed to see two bright-orange lights that appeared to be solid, round objects (see cover). One object was directly over the trees in the cemetery, and the other was further back. He could not hear any sound coming from the lights. Bryant made a point of the fact that he could not see any wings. The first light disappeared after about a minute, the second about 20 seconds later. This witness believed the lights to be about 1,000 yards away and 1,000 feet in the air. An interesting note is that Bryant, a big bear of a man who had played college football, was the only one I interviewed who admitted to be frightened by the experience.

(continued on page 26)

ENIGMA VARIATIONS: PROTO-UFOS AND OTHER STRANGENESS

BY JEROME CLARK

In the last issue of *IUR* ("Proto-UFOs," Spring 2003), I discussed my ongoing search through newspaper archives for accounts of anomalous occurrences. Modern technology has made it possible to do such searches online (sometimes for a fee), though it is still an enormously time-consuming enterprise.

Having worked at it virtually fulltime since late May 2003, I have managed to fill several boxfuls of fat file folders with material on a range of extraordinary phenomena, mostly from the mid-to-late 19th century and into the early years of the 20th, and yet feel that the project has barely started. Charles Fort (1874–1932), the first ufologist, had the first pass at this stuff, alerting all who came in his wake to what awaited. For all his effort, which can fairly be called monumental, it is a long way from definitive. The amount of Fortean material undetected by Fort is enormous, challenging the still small but growing numbers of researchers—mostly, though not entirely, huddled in the Magonia Exchange e-list hosted by Chris Aubeck and Rod Brock—using the new technology to recover the old data.

When I take a break from all this, I will be able to make a concentrated effort to analyze what we have. The remarks that follow, therefore, are merely preliminary. I am inclined to doubt that I will have to retract these early observations, but I certainly expect one day, when we all know more, to expand on them and to revise them in the light of fresh and revelatory information.

First and most obvious, we are not finding investigated and documented stories. Investigation and documentation will come later, at least in those rare instances where it is possible. They are simply tales told as true in American newspapers of many decades ago. Some of the reports that have been uncovered are entirely credible, accurately describing unusual but recognizable natural phenomena, ball lightning, spectacular auroral displays, and out-of-the-ordinary meteor falls in two examples. Others seem to be honestly related, even if the subjects are fantastic or otherwise indifferent to consensus reality's expectations. In other words, living, breathing, typically sincere people of our own time claim comparable experiences. Consequently, editorial concoction, a not unheard-of practice in early journalism, is not necessarily the inevitable solution. A third category comprises claims that one simply does not know what to make of, and which are best appreciated simply as colorful stories. The final group consists of certain—or at least apparently certain—tall tales. There is no shortage of these, and they will be the subject of a future article.

As I remarked last time, phenomena that sound like modern UFOs are not absent, but they are rare. The rare ones are nearly all nocturnal lights, distinguishable, or apparently so, from natural atmospheric occurrences by their appearance, behavior, duration, or other factors. As the newspapers of the period attest, our 19th-century ancestors were keen observers of nature; editors, reporters, and letter writers filled columns with meticulous descriptions of astronomical and meteorological manifestations. Even when writing of something they did not understand, their accounts are sufficiently precise to identify the phenomena in question to a modern reader. That is why I take their observations of anomalous lights seriously. To people separated from us by a century or more, the night sky was a living presence, not something blocked out by the blinding glare of urban electricity.

For the rest, examples of which this article like its predecessor highlights, I have coined the term "proto-UFO." These were, literally, unidentified flying objects, but not UFOs in the modern sense of the term. They are variations on the theme of otherworldly manifestations in or emanating from the sky. What they tell us, if anything, about our post-World War II UFOs is a subject that awaits further discussion and debate. Probably, serious discussion is premature at this juncture, for the obvious reason that we have so much more to learn about how anomalies were conceived, experienced, or imagined in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

NOCTURNAL LIGHTS

These are the sorts of reports that would have appeared in Fort's books if he had come upon the press accounts. They range from the apparently truly anomalous to the unusual

Jerome Clark, an editor of IUR *and member of the CUFOS board, is author of the multivolume* UFO Encyclopedia *(Omnigraphics, 1990–1998). He is currently at work on a book on Fortean phenomena in 19th-century America.*

but probably explainable.

In the former category is this account, titled "Atmospherical Phenomenon" and published in a Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, paper, the *Adams Sentinel*, March 27, 1854:

> The *Washington City* [D.C.] *Globe* of Wednesday evening last [March 22], mentions that on the evening previous, about half past 9 o'clock, the attention of the people in the street was directed to a brilliant light in the zenith, described by those who saw it, in appearance like a coal of fire glowing, three feet long, and a foot wide, of a bright crimson, redder than ever the planet Mars appeared. It was stationary, and lasted twenty minutes to half an hour, when it gradually faded away.

The following report likely is of an odd cloud. According to the *Sunday Advocate*, Newark, Ohio, June 30, 1895:

> A phenomenon, which is not easily explained, appeared in the heavens about 9 o'clock last night, remaining for about twenty minutes. It was in the shape of a finger and a thumb, which pointed toward the east. In color it was of a milky whiteness. It was observed by many of our people, some of whom consider it a sign of turbulent times in the far east.

On the other hand, this sighting, by a clearly knowledgeable observer, seems genuinely puzzling—which is to say unmeteorlike—and it echoes any number of modern reports. The source is the *New York Daily Times* (as it was then called), January 25, 1855, reprinted from the *New-Haven* (Connecticut) *Palladium* of two days earlier:

> METEORITIC PHENOMENON.—Passing across the public square last night about 10 o'clock, the writer observed a phenomenon which seems worthy of record. It was a brilliant red ball of fire about two minutes in diameter. It was first visible about eight degrees below the guards in Ursa Minor, and near the small star Gamma in the belly of the Dragon. At first it seemed stationary, but in about fifteen seconds commenced moving slowly toward the east in an almost horizontal line, and with at first (I think, but am not positive,) a slight and undulatory motion. It passed below and about one degree from the star Benetnash in Ursa Major, and disappeared in the distance, not far from Denebola in the constellation Leo. There was no explosion, nor were any scintillations thrown off at any time while I saw it.

Under the title "Wonders of a Meteor" the Ohio newspaper *Marion Daily Star* of October 5, 1880, carried this account of a curious observation:

> At a quarter to ten o'clock on Thursday night [September 30], says a recent issue of the Columbus (Ga.) *Enquirer*, a meteor of extraordinary brilliancy was seen to cross the heavens at a very low altitude. Rising in the south, it took a northeasterly course, preserving a perfectly horizontal line in its journey. It was composed of three parts, which were perfectly developed balls of an equal size, and equi-distant from each other. The first ball threw out a tail which enveloped the two following balls and extended several yards behind them. This tail was exceedingly luminous, save at the extremity, which was somehow indistinct, having a nebulous appearance. Its motion was slow, and was visible to the observer for full fifty seconds. It did not fall to the ground like other meteors, but continued to course northeastward until lost sight of. It was indeed a brilliant and extraordinary phenomenon.

Fantastic Meteorology

The phenomenon recounted below is most likely of meteorological origin, but it is nonetheless fantastic and the sort of occurrence that would have attracted Fort's attention. Reported originally in the *Hartford Times*, it was soon after reprinted in other newspapers, including Ohio's *Coshocton Semi-Weekly Age,* October 9, 1888, which is where I found it. The body of water in question is Connecticut's Highland Lake, near Winsted (at that time called Long Lake):

> The lake is three miles long, and is divided into three bays. About 3:15 o'clock a vivid flash of lightning illuminated the scenery, followed by a terrific peal of thunder. The wind by this time was blowing with cyclonic force. Suddenly there came a roar, and far down the lake a huge flame of fire could be seen. The water for yards ahead was parted as though by a gigantic plow, and the billows seemed to rise at the side of this furrow for fully twenty feet.
>
> The ball of fire seemed to force the water aside, and so deep did it go that the bottom of the lake could almost be seen as it passed through the narrows. The parted waters, with their singular propeller, advanced toward the head of the lake with great rapidity. When within one hundred yards of the shore there came another flash of lightning, and the fire disappeared as suddenly as it had come.
>
> The residents along the lake who witnessed the strange phenomenon were greatly alarmed. They insist that the ball of fire was fully ten feet long, and half of the mass appeared to be buried in the waters of the lake. It was many hours before the waters of the lake became calm.

A correspondent identified only as P. Johnson of Carbondale, Pennsylvania, reported this strange meteorological—or possibly meteoritic—event in a June 20, 1857, letter to the *New York Tribune* (as reprinted in the Canton *Ohio Repository* for July 15):

> A strange and startling phenomenon took place near this city just at sunset last evening.
>
> A large cloud was seen making its appearance, coming directly from the northwest, accompanied by considerable wind. When near this place, a dark looking

cloud, or substance, was seen to leave the cloud and make diagonally for the earth. So soon as it struck the ground, contrary to all expectation, it became highly luminous. Making directly for a large barn that stood in the field, it passed through its center, setting it on fire, and continued its course, gaining in velocity as far as the eye could reach, making a straight course for the woods, melting stone of considerable size, and burning up brush and under wood, making a complete road, of a rod or more in width, for the distance of three miles, and finally fetching up against a perpendicular breast of solid anthracite coal of 60 feet in thickness, proving rather too much for its cometship, leaving nothing but a sulphurous mass behind.

Airships

On April 21, 1897, the *New Orleans Picayune* related that a few hours before, just after midnight, an employee who had stepped outside the newspaper office spotted a passing airship, one of the many being reported in the United States that month and the subject of much speculation and derision. He ran back up the steps and excitedly recounted his sighting of a mysterious craft, 50 to 60 feet long, bearing a powerful searchlight and heading toward the northwest. His colleagues went out to see for themselves, but observing nothing, they subjected the unhappy man to jokes and ridicule. Still, the newspaper noted, "His general reputation for truth and veracity is such . . . that his friends cannot help but believe that he saw something, and as the airship was seen in the vicinity of Natchitoches yesterday, it is not unlikely that it may have come from this direction." The article went on:

> A young man connected with the Picayune claimed to have seen the airship here on April 1, but all he saw was the searchlight, as it was dark at the time. It was generally treated as an April fool joke, but the subsequent excitement caused by the alleged appearance of the strange craft in other cities leads to the belief that there may be some truth in it.
>
> The two successful navigators of the airship, Dolbear and Tilman, as they gave their names to the people of Stephenville, Tex., were supposed to have been in the city last night, but it was in all likelihood a hoax, as cards sent to their rooms failed to get any response.

This is a reference to an earlier alleged (almost certainly fictional) incident from April 17, reported by Stephenville farmer C. L. Mcilhany, who supposedly spoke with the crew of a landed airship. The two identified themselves as S. E. Tillman and A. E. Dolbear (as the original account, the *Dallas Morning News* of April 19, spells their names) and said they were experimenting with an aerial device financed by New York investors who preferred to remain anonymous. The *Picayune* account continues:

> Natchitoches, La., April 20.—Last night at about 1:30 o'clock, as a gay crowd were returning from a reception given by Company 1 at the Armory Hall, they were treated to a strange sight, coming from the western heavens. That spectacle consisted of a massive airship, the first story being of balloon shape, and the under car being of conical or cigar form. When first seen it seemed but a faintly animated spark, which, as it came nearer, gradually grew brighter. After a few moments its entire form was clearly perceptible and developed a structure [rest of line illegible] in semi-darkness. Its destination appeared to be northerly, and it gave indications, from its course, of coming from Texas. It was evidently a machine of unique invention, as its movement was of an undulatory character, and bore striking resemblance to the movement of some huge bird. It was visible, though about a thousand feet high, for nearly half an hour, and was a rare curiosity to those who had the good fortune to witness the phenomenon. The remarkable fact in connection with its visitation was that, as its course neared the city, the light that illuminated it became suddenly low, and did not again rise until the city was left in the darkness.

The airship wave had begun in central California in November 1896, before gradually moving eastward into the Midwest, Texas, and all states but the Northeast by the spring of the following year. The alleged events in Woodland, north-northwest of Sacramento, are representative, albeit with an amusing conclusion which Mark Twain could have written.

On November 24 the *Woodland Daily Democrat*, while carefully disavowing any belief in a mysterious airship, allowed as how there could be "no doubt"—owing to the quantity of credible witnesses—that the upper atmosphere hosted some sort of "mysterious light." At Woodland, three weeks earlier, before all the publicity had begun,

> L. Charmak and a gentleman who requests us to withhold his name were standing in front of Mr. Charmak's place of business. The hour was between 8 and 9 in the evening. Suddenly a moving light, or, more properly, lights, appeared in the southwestern portion of the sky. Mr. Charmak's attention was called to it. The unusual visitor was traveling in a northeasterly direction, and when first seen was apparently over the residence of A. D. Porter.
>
> As it reached Main street it suddenly arose 100 feet or more, but continued its forward movement in the same direction. It traveled very slowly and it was half a minute from the time it came in sight until the Capital Hotel shut it out from view.
>
> While it was traveling broadside Mr. Charmak and his friend had an opportunity to get a good view of it. There were three distinct lights, closely resembling an arc light. They were close together and a uniform distance apart, and were followed by a long train of light

like that which usually follows in the train of a shooting star, except that it was white.

Their first thought was that it was a meteor, but its proximity to the earth, eccentric movements and unusual form hardly warranted such a theory. The more they thought about it, the more their doubts increased.

On the 28th the *Daily Democrat* featured sightings made by locals on the late evening of the previous day, though there is little in the account to give one confidence that the observations of a "bright but unusual light" were of anything truly enigmatic. More compelling were reports from a week later, on December 4. These serve to illustrate a point some airship researchers have made, namely that many reports of "airships" were not of fanciful Zeppelin-like craft but of nebulous light sources, some certainly astronomical bodies, others less certainly so. This incident is one of the latter, anticipating post-1947 cases of train chases by UFOs:

DAVISVILLE [now Davis], December 7.—Conductor Corbell, who runs a freight train on the main line, was here this morning and told an interesting story about seeing an airship.

Last Friday evening his train ran into Oakland. While between Dixon and Elmira [southwest of Davis], and between 6:30 and 7 o'clock, a man named Byrns, who was riding in the caboose, saw two bright lights to the right of the track and traveling parallel with the train.

After watching it a few minutes he called the conductor. The phenomenon was so unusual that the conductor called two men traveling on the train in charge of some stock. These four men saw the lights distinctly and their stories agree perfectly. They were about one thousand feet high and traveling in the same direction as the train. Their speed was greater than that of the train, however, and they watched the lights until they disappeared in the southwestern heavens.

One of the lights was as large as the head light of an engine. One of the stockmen offered to wager two carloads of fat cattle that there was no delusion about it but that it was a genuine airship.

George Little and his wife, of Davisville, partially confirm this story. A few minutes after six o'clock they saw something in the air that tallies exactly with the description given by the conductor.

The Woodland newspaper's coverage of its local airship scare ended on a farcical, wonderful note with a letter published as a feature story on December 8. The writer was frustrated inventor H. Lytle of nearby Arbuckle. A headline writer crowned Lytle's testimony with the title, seriously or otherwise, "THE MYSTERY SOLVED. A Resident of Arbuckle Explains the Airship Phenomenon."

Lytle opened his communication by noting that he had seen the airship on "Tuesday last" (December 1) as it flew toward the southwest over the Coast Ranges 15 miles west of Arbuckle and three miles north of Rumsey. The sighting sparked not awe but exasperation. He recognized it for what it was, and that was not a welcome sight. He went on:

Three years ago I submitted the plans I had drawn of an aircycle, with explanations, to Mr. E. W. Brown, of Davisville. He at once saw that there was no doubt as to the successful operation of a machine constructed on those plans and at once advanced the necessary funds for the construction of the same.

The machine consists of an aluminum tube twelve feet long and three feet in diameter pointed at the end like a cigar. Four feet under the tube and running parallel with it is a light steel frame similar to a tandem bicycle frame. Each end of this frame is connected with the tube. On the frame there are two seats, two handle-bars and two pedals, the same as on a tandem. The pedals operate the propeller and side wings. The propeller is used to force the aircycle ahead and the wings are used to ascend and descend as the operator chooses. There is also a rudder that sits behind the propeller the same as those on a steamship. This is operated by the handle-bars. This part is very simple. The difficult part is in obtaining the gas which is used in the tube and has great lifting power. This gas is obtained at an altitude of twenty-five miles above sea level. How this is obtained will not be stated here. Suffice to say that this is also simple when one has the instruments.

The ship was dubbed the *Nonesuch.* Brown and Lytle commenced trying short flights, and at Brown's urging these flights, always under cover of darkness, became longer and longer. The two were elated at the aircycle's success, and they decided to risk an extended flight southward. To keep them from asking questions, Brown told his friends that he planned to take a short vacation in the countryside. On March 1, 1893, at 10:30 p.m., they set off.

We could make thirty miles per hour without any exertion, and, with the wind at our backs, seventy-five miles an hour was easy. We could always make better time at night, for, when we were surrounded by darkness, we did not experience that dizzy feeling that would come over us in the daytime.

On the morning of the 2d day of March we landed near Los Angeles. Securing our cycle to a fence (which was necessary, for as soon as we dismounted there was an upward pull of 330 pounds) we started for a farmhouse that stood near by. We were just in time to enjoy a good breakfast, which we very much needed after our night's ride.

That, however, was the end of the good times. On their return, when they were about a hundred yards from the spot at which they had parked the *Nonesuch,* they saw two hoboes inside the ship. As Brown and Lytle rushed the craft and shouted at the tramps, the two men rose into the sky and were quickly gone.

The now-earthbound aeronauts had only $2.75 between them. Brown feared that if he telegraphed home for money, it would be hard to conceal the true reason he was not where he had said he would be. When Brown tried to pawn his watch, a suspicious pawnbroker refused to accept it. They finally decided that they had no choice but to walk back to Sacramento. At the conclusion of that no doubt exhausting trek, they looked up a friend of Brown's. The friend loaned them $5 for train fare to Davisville.

> We never heard any more from the aircycle until a short time ago. I saw in the newspapers that an airship was reported at various places, but that no one had had the opportunity of examining it and that the actions were a mystery. I suspected that it was the Nonesuch which had returned. Those who are in charge know that if they land they will at once be arrested.
>
> I expect the question will be asked why I don't build another aircycle. The answer is that the instruments for securing the gas were on the Nonesuch when she was taken charge of by those two knights of the road.

Lytle surely has the distinction of being the only witness in history to assert that the UFO he observed was his stolen invention.

Mystery-airship stories did not end in 1897 but continued into the early years of the next century (and arguably longer). Among the most bizarre was one told by a Tennessee man named Walter Stephenson. The article, identified as a reprint from the *Nashville American*, appeared in at least two other newspapers, including Oklahoma's *Ada Evening News* on July 1, 1907. It was uncovered by Dutch researcher Theo Paijmans in the course of his own archival searches:

> Walter Stephenson, while out training a pair of bloodhounds near the Dikeman springs, was subjected to a unique experience. . . . He was just finishing a long chase with his dogs and sat down on a log to rest, when he espied upon the eastern horizon a speck, which he took to be a large kite. He paid little attention to the object, and shifted his gaze temporarily to other scenes. Soon his attention was attracted to a whirring noise, and looking upward, he saw that the speck which he had a few moments before discovered in the eastern sky, had approached almost directly over him, and that the object was in reality a huge balloon, but of a pattern and appearance he had never in his life before seen. He discovered that the floating mass was rapidly approaching the earth. Of a sudden, the observer says, strains of music calculated to charm the spheres burst from the balloon, which circled round and round and finally landed at Kideman springs. A number of strange people emerged from the car, which was closely curtained with a substance that fairly glistened in the sunshine that temporarily burst through the obscuring clouds, and all going to the big, flowing spring, knelt by it in a supplicating attitude and so remained for a minute or more. Mr. Stephenson says that while this was going on he sat quietly within speaking distance, and when the strange visitors arose to their feet and he supposed their devotional exercises were over, he asked if he might be permitted to inquire who they were and what their mission? He said that instantly a visard was lifted by one of the company and the benign face of a lady showed from underneath and said in German: "Haben sie Beten?" ("Did you pray?") and instantly all were aboard, the airship rose, circled about for a minute or more, and was gone in a westerly direction.
>
> Mr. Stephenson says that the incident left an impression upon him that he can never forget, and while he knows that it was some human invention, it looked and the music sounded more like that of angels than of mortals.

German-speaking UFO occupants would resurface during the 1957 wave, when on November 5 grain buyer Reinhold Schmidt claimed an encounter with what looked like a "blimp"—airship by another name—near Kearney, Nebraska. Its crew, four human-looking men and two women, spoke "high" (literary) German to each other, German-accented English to him. Schmidt went on to a career as a yarn-spinning contactee (and, in 1961, a prison sentence for grand theft in a confidence scheme related to his alleged contacts), and few take even his initial report seriously.

Less well-known is an odd report, uninvestigated by any ufologist of the period, from 12-year-old Everett Clark from the next morning (November 6). Clark, who lived on a farm in the Knoxville, Tennessee, area, reportedly saw a landed "long and round" object and its occupants, two men and two women, who spoke in a language that sounded to him like the German he had heard in movies. Returning from their overnight job not long afterwards, his parents found him in a hysterical state and notified the authorities.

Later in the day a reporter and photographer from the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* discovered an elliptical imprint in the grass; five feet wide and 24 feet long, it looked as if left by a "big cigar-shaped frame," though inside the perimeter the grass was unaffected. Young Clark insisted that he had not heard Schmidt's story, which had sparked widespread comment and was prominently featured in the nation's papers that morning.

Airship-era press accounts occasionally mentioned music emanating from the vehicles. In fact, one of the very first newspaper stories of the turn-of-the-century wave, appearing in the *Sacramento Bee* for November 18, 1896, noted that some witnesses thought they heard the crew "singing in a chorus."

Over the next months various claims would mention not just singing voices but instruments, usually the pipe organ. I leave it to readers to decide for themselves how seriously to take such matters.

(continued on page 28)

ORTHOTENY AS A WORLD GRID: THE INTRA-OCULAR IMPACT TEST

BY DON JOHNSON

In the Spring 2000 issue of *IUR*, pp. 18–19, 32, my article titled "New Lines in UFO Research: Orthoteny Revisited" reviewed the evidence for three great circle routes in France apparently used by UFOs: BAVIC, AUPER, and CAMAC. These three lines appear to have upwards of 50 UFO reports each falling along their paths that intersect at a single point in Puy-de-Dôme, France. In *IUR,* Autumn 2000, pp. 24–28, Claude Maugé responded with a critical review, "Orthoteny: Lost Cause, or a Redeemed One?"

I welcome the critical response that Maugé provided to my article on orthoteny as a serious topic for UFO research; I would rather have these ideas criticized than ignored. I look forward to a continuing dialogue on this stimulating topic. Here I will respond to each of his points, but I also intend to shift the direction of the argument away from some of the original notions about the "straight-line" mystery developed in the 1950s by Aimé Michel.[1] This shift in thinking is crucial because it will render moot most of the objections raised by Maugé.

First, we must refine and agree upon our terminology. His first objection is centered on the definition of what constitutes a straight line. In non-Euclidean geometry, all parallel lines on the surface of a sphere do indeed intersect at two points. These lines are straight lines or great circles because they define the shortest distance between two points. A great circle is a circle upon the earth's surface formed by the intersection of a plane passed through its center. Meridians of longitude are great circles, formed by the intersection with the earth's surface of planes perpendicular to the equator and passing through the poles. All meridians are equal in length and meet at the two poles. Distances along the meridians between any two parallels are equal.

The lines that denote latitude are not in fact parallel lines (even though they are called "parallels") because they do not intersect. Latitude lines are not the shortest routes between two points. Parallels of latitude are instead "small circles," formed by the intersection with the earth's surface of planes parallel to the equator. The length of the parallels decreases from the equator to the poles. At latitude 60°, the circumference of the parallel is one-half the circumference of the equator.

The fact that a latitude line is not the shortest route between two points can easily be demonstrated on a globe: Although Los Angeles and Tokyo are at approximately the same latitude, the shortest route between these two cities does not follow the 35th parallel but inscribes an arc passing well above the 45th parallel and just south of the Aleutian Islands. These shortest-distance routes are great circle lines. All of the lines defined in my article, and the orthotenic lines defined by Michel and Saunders that intersect near Puy-de-Dôme (BAVIC, AUPER, and CAMAC), are great circle lines.

Maugé objects to my construction of great circle lines that do not fall within the same 24-hour period. He correctly points out that this is contrary to the original definition of orthotenic lines used by Michel. I contend that the date of the occurrence of the UFO sightings or close encounters is irrelevant because the great-circle alignment is not a one-time event. Reports fall along these lines repeatedly in wave after wave of UFO reports.

Furthermore, I contend that whether these great circle routes were first discovered in data from 1954 or 1947 or 1973 is also not terribly important. The important thing is that the pattern reappears. If you were to discover surveyor stakes running in a straight line in the forest or field behind your house, and a week later you find more stakes, some conforming to that original line and others running in a straight line perpendicular to the original set, would it not be reasonable to conclude that some construction project will likely follow, either a set of roads, power lines, or building lots? The date on which the stakes first appear is not important, unless you hope to stop the project; in which case the sooner you discover the stakes the better. To carry the analogy a little further, if you proceed to remove the stakes and some short time later someone puts new ones in their place, does that not tell you something about the persistence and the importance of the phenomenon?

Don Johnson maintains the UFOCAT database for CUFOS and is the author of numerous papers on many aspects of the UFO phenomenon.

Likewise, whether Michel had his dates wrong or not, and whether or not you choose to include any of the original six sightings that he used to define BAVIC (the Bayonne to Vichy great circle route), BAVIC does exist! It is defined by UFO cases that have occurred subsequent to 1954, and even by cases that occurred prior to that time.

Maugé criticizes my choice of UFO cases, in that any reliance upon 1954 cases requires that one rely upon newspaper clippings about sightings and close encounters that were never properly investigated. I agree that any mapping and grid system should rely upon high quality cases as much as possible. I have pondered this problem and how best to address it for a long time. It is a frustrating fact that most case files on UFO events lack bits of information that would be necessary to categorize them as "high-quality."

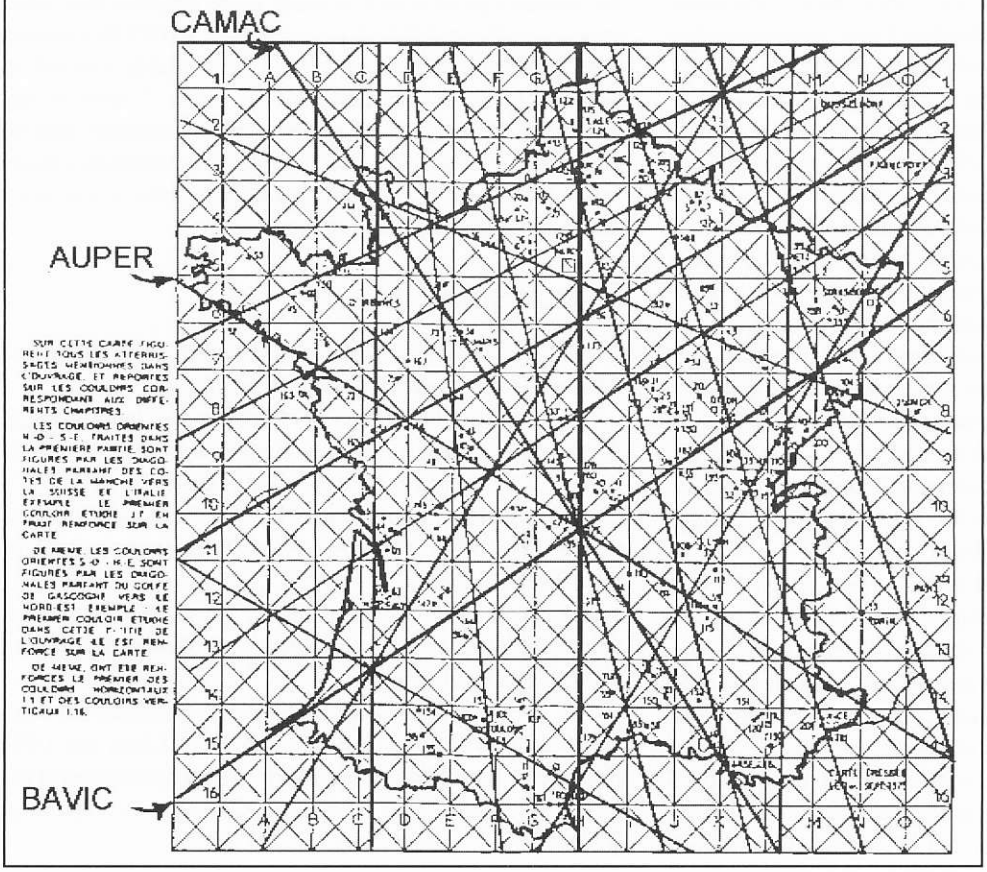
On the other hand, relying solely upon the highest quality UFO cases would result in a serious bias in the data because one would be forced to include only those cases from affluent societies where trained and competent UFO field investigators live nearby and have invested the time and money necessary to do a thorough investigation. Nearly always this means the presence of a determined volunteer network, because rarely have governments or NGOs (non-governmental organizations) sponsored or funded such work. With the exception of a couple of European governments providing minor support for UFO research, whenever there has been government-sponsored investigations, their motives have quickly become suspect and likewise the information from their resulting reports.

One compromise approach I have developed is to plot only the high-strangeness UFO cases, focusing particularly on those cases with claims of physical effects and the presence of aliens. Not all close-encounter reports are well investigated, but they are less likely to be caused by mundane phenomena such as weather or the misidentification of aircraft, satellites, or astronomical bodies. They also are likely to have more than one citation in the literature.

In my analysis using the UFOCAT database I have filtered out those cases that were flagged by the primary investigator as either explained or probably explainable. The other rule I have adopted is to only plot great circle lines that have four or more close encounter cases, because lines with fewer than four map points are much too likely to be due to chance alone.

The mapping software I have been using is Microsoft Map Point 2000. I have verified that it does an accurate job of inscribing great circle lines up to nearly halfway around the globe. It represents quite an increase in productivity and reliability over hand-mapping geographical coordinates because it will plot a few thousand coordinates in a matter of minutes. It also does a better job of eliminating honest mistakes that would occur if the process of exploring possible great circle alignments were left entirely to the imagination and hand plots of the researcher.

Figure 1. Planetary grid superimposed on Garreau and Lavier's grid (Garreau and Lavier, 1975).



Studying these maps on the computer screen, two general linear patterns emerge. The first appears to be an interlocking grid with lines converging on hot spots that are major intersections of great circle routes. In France, this grid bears similarity to the one proposed by Garreau and Lavier,[2] who plotted 202 landing cases from 1947 to 1975. BAVIC is rotated 29° from their set of east-west lines, CAMAC is rotated 29° from their set of north-south lines, and AUPER is rotated 146° from their east-west lines. I have shown the BAVIC-CAMAC-AUPER grid superimposed upon the Garreau and Lavier grid in Figure 1. These lines tend to be oriented in such a manner as to conform to natural fea-

tures and landmarks. For example, lines tend to intersect with the mouths of rivers, parallel coastlines, and pass through straits and channels.

The second noticeable pattern is that there appear to be sets of two, three, or four parallel lines that overlap this grid. They give the appearance of satellite tracks, and suggest that these lines are not part of the permanent grid but trace flight paths.

Maugé assumes that because the statistical tables were absent from my earlier article I have relied solely upon "play[ing] with point coordinates in a computer." This is not entirely the case. I have checked the goodness-of-fit of many lines statistically. For coordinates along a line with a length of 200 miles or less I have used least-squares linear regression and compare the predicted latitude with the observed latitude and only consider points as qualifying for a line if the predicted latitude is off by less than 0.15 degrees. This method works adequately for the temperate and tropical regions, but presents large inaccuracies when attempted for the subpolar regions. For coordinates falling along a line with a distance greater than 500 miles, the distortion caused by the curvature of the Earth is too great to use linear regression, and I have employed polar coordinates and the equation suggested by Haythornthwaite.[3]

I agree with Maugé that whether or not orthotenic alignments exist is ultimately a mathematical question. I propose the following statistical test. We need to judge the statistical remarkability of the alignments using some measure of the probability of observing an identical mapping from random sets of geographical coordinates of the same number. I propose that we use Bradley Efron's bootstrapping procedure [4] to generate a sampling distribution. We would repeatedly draw samples with replacement from a large universe of geographical coordinates with plausible boundaries, calculate the number of alignments obtained, and repeat the process a large number of times.

A geographical region such as the Iberian Peninsula would be a good test case because the land mass is nearly square and it has a long coastline, so if there is any merit to my hypothesis that lines do indeed intersect with rivers and bays or parallel coastlines, it will stand or fall by comparing the number of lines with five or more points to the distribution that results from the bootstrapping process. In lieu of these more rigorous statistical results, which must wait for the future completion of this computer-intensive technique, I make at this time the following two arguments that the alignments are real and not illusory.

My first defense is based upon the best statistical test that I know, the intra-ocular impact test! Does the impact of the evidence "hit you between the eyes"? Trace a few of the longer lines and count the number of cases. Without double counting the sites with multiple cases, a line from near Cádiz, Spain, through Helsinki, Finland, has 13 points defining it. The line from Loch Maree in the Highlands of Scotland to the Isle of Capri near Naples, Italy, has 11 points defining it, and many of these are hot spots with multiple reports occurring over many years. BAVIC still has seven points that are CE2 and CE3 reports, and this is just considering Europe and ignoring the additional points that define it in South America and Asia.

Are these alignments illusory? I would deem this unlikely. Does my method for developing these alignments capitalize on chance? Undeniably. But is there a pattern that is so obvious upon visual inspection that it would be hard to deny something is going on? It certainly looks that way to me. And it becomes even plainer and more convincing when you scrutinize these mappings up close. For this reason I am offering to provide the UFOCAT 2003 CD-ROM to anyone who would seriously like to independently verify what I believe to be the truth .[5] The maps that can be produced on paper from the mapping software do not entirely do justice to the dramatic impact I am describing here.

My second argument is that the network of great circle lines appears to be an interlocking grid and conforms to an orderly pattern. This grid would be even less likely to be due to chance, because the degrees of freedom necessary to define the grid are reduced. I believe that the orthotenic alignments represent a navigation system, possibly tied to a propulsion system, used by the UFOs. Others have suggested the existence of a grid system, but the great circle alignments provided by mapping the UFOCAT close-encounter data provide confirmatory evidence for the existence of a worldwide grid.

David Saunders suggested such a grid network as a possibility in his 1972 MUFON symposium presentation, the manuscript of which is much more detailed than what appears in the published proceedings.[6] MUFON requires that the written version of the talk be available a month in advance of the conference, so the paper I have in my possession has several pages devoted to orthoteny that do not appear in print. I have sent a copy of the Saunders paper to the Center for UFO Studies and will make a free copy available to anyone who contacts me.

References

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3. P. K. Haythornthwaite, "BAVIC Plotted As a World Circle Line," *Flying Saucer Review* 9 (November–December 1963): 17–18.

4. Persi Diaconis and Bradley Efron, "Computer-intensive Methods in Statistics," *Scientific American* 248, no. 5 (May 1983): 116–130.

5. Requests can be emailed to donjohnson@ufocat.com.

6. David R. Saunders, "Some New Lines for UFO Research" (unpublished manuscript), paper presented at the 1972 Midwest UFO Network Conference, Quincy, Illinois. ✦

THE FLYING BOX, AND OTHER CASES

BY RAYMOND FOWLER

I consider the "Flying Box" sighting a significant case in my files because it involved a very unorthodox-appearing object (even for a UFO) seen on the ground at extremely close range for several minutes before it took off. Other witnesses heard its strange whining sound and saw the physical traces it left behind just moments later. A most thorough investigation has indicated that a hoax or misinterpretation would have been next to impossible under the overall circumstances.

The unusual incident was brought to my attention by investigator Nat G., a senior scientist employed by a very well-known camera company. An acquaintance of Nat's, who does consultant engineering, had told him a most intriguing story. He said that he had become a good friend with a manager within a large industrial firm while doing consultant work. The manager had confided with him about a landed UFO that his son had come across while walking in the woods with his dog. The witness's father had told very few people about this experience. Nat, through his friend, sought his cooperation with me in conducting an investigation. He agreed to let me interview his son and others indirectly involved provided full anonymity was guaranteed.

A detailed investigation was launched by myself and a scientist named John O., who has conducted research into a number of UFO sightings that have taken place in the area around Exeter, New Hampshire.

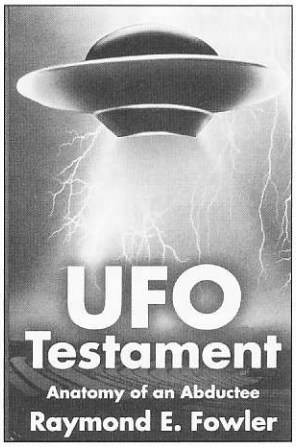
THE INCIDENT

On March 29, 1966, at approximately 4:15 p.m., the witness, age 10, was walking with his Dalmatian dog in a woodlot behind his home toward a small pond. He walked this route a few times a week.

The initial encounter. When turning off a rough woods road onto a path leading up a long wooded ridge, he noticed something silver on top of the ridge, which he first thought was radar chaff caught in the branches of a tree. He moved onto the path and could then see that it seemed to be a roughly spherical mass of shredded silver material affixed to the top of a vertical silver rod that stuck up out of what appeared to be the top of a box about 120 feet away. As he

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Raymond Fowler, now retired, was an active UFO investigator for over 30 years. He was arguably the best UFO investigator in history, and his investigations are legendary for their meticulous care, attention to all possible mundane causes, and extremely detailed written reports. His work and reports are models for all those aspiring to become competent investigators and make a contribution to UFO research.



Recently, Fowler summed up his life in ufology in *UFO Testament* (San Jose, Calif.: Writer's Showcase, 2002), which also discusses his gradual realization that he has experienced abduction events for years. In this book, he explains how he became involved in doing UFO investigations, and recounts some of his more interesting cases. He also describes his own sightings and other weird experiences that have continued from his childhood.

Fowler was kind enough to give *IUR* permission to reprint selected extracts from *UFO Testament*, allowing the editors to choose the material. Accordingly, we have chosen three excerpts. The first, "The Flying Box," describes an extremely close encounter from 1966 that had more than one witness and physical traces. It is a reminder of the type of case that was much more common 30 years ago. The second, "Abduction Wake-Up Call," shows how Fowler, like almost everyone, was reluctant to recognize abduction accounts when they began to appear in the late 1960s. The third, "The Burley Woods Incident," explores a missing time episode that Fowler had as a young teen. These three selections provide a representative sample of the *UFO Testament*'s mix of the personal and professional.

walked closer, the silver rod could be plainly seen. It was about the same thickness as a pencil and about 18 inches in length.

The boy's next thought was that this thing must be some experiment placed there by a neighbor, a consulting physicist, who lives on an adjacent farm. The physicist was known to conduct experiments in his electronics laboratory located in a barn on his property. The witness took his eyes off the "box" for a moment and when he looked at it again, the silver shaft had disappeared. He was only 75 feet from the object at this point, according to on-site measurements taken by John and myself.

As he continued to walk up the path toward the object, he saw that it was a box shaped like an "L" lying on its side with tripod legs. Curious, he increased his pace while his dog ran ahead and began sniffing it. Apparently not interested, it continued on its way into the woods. When he got within 24 feet of it, he stepped off the path and stepped slightly behind two trees. It was at this point that he realized he was not sure what it was he was looking at.

The object's first movements. Suddenly, there was a terrific blast of air from under the object, and pine needles and cones flew helter-skelter. Simultaneously, there was a short high- then a low-pitched sound—*who-o-op-whe-e-e!*—as the object lifted off the ground about a foot, stopped in midair, swung around in a clockwise motion and settled down on the ground again. This maneuver was about four seconds in duration.

The object had risen with a perfectly vertical motion in an unwavering, mechanical-like manner. It was all too obvious that this object had nothing to do with his neighbor's experiments. The thought that it must be some kind of Air Force hovercraft raced through his mind as curiosity suddenly changed to terror. He did not know whether to run or what to do. Then, strange electric-like sounds came from within the "box" and he froze to the spot.

Detailed object description. The witness found himself facing the intermittently humming object about broadside, that is, with its longest side about parallel with him. He got a good look at this side of it. On the upper left side, which was higher, there were two round black holes that seemed to be just under an inch in diameter. These appeared to be definite openings, not just markings, and were recessed into the object about an inch. They were spaced about six inches apart and centered in the upper left portion appearing like eyes watching him. He saw nothing inside these holes.

Centered and attached to the middle of the object's underside was a round-appearing section protruding downwards that looked like a dishpan or flattened dome. It was about two feet in diameter and had three two-inch openings spaced around that part of the circumference facing the witness. The holes were more egg-shaped than round and were like an egg standing on end. He never noticed if there were similar holes continuing around the circumference of this dome-like protrusion.

The color of the box-like part of the object was a brownish hue that blended well with the trees. Its surface was somewhat like that of unevenly rusted steel but looked more like the pitted surface that cork displays. It looked more non-metallic than metallic.

The object had definite sharp edges, that is, its extremities were not rounded. The dome-like section appeared to be of similar material but darker and more like metal. The tripod legs were square shafts about one inch in diameter. They appeared to be about one foot long and were attached to the bottom of the object around and slightly away from where the dome was attached.

Each leg angled out slightly and had a pad attached on the end. The pads were about one foot long and about two inches square. The legs were attached about three inches inwards, and about nine inches of the pad toed inward, forming V-shapes relative to one another. They appeared to be constructed of a very dull, non-shiny metal.

Intermittent sounds come from object. While wondering what to do next and thinking about turning around and running, the boy hesitated as he heard a series of intermittent electric-like sounds coming from within the object. A "humming" was as close as he could describe these sounds, although he felt this was not a satisfactory description. The sound stopped and started three to four times in a random rather than in an evenly timed fashion for about one minute. The longest of these humming periods was estimated to be about 15 seconds in duration when John and I timed the witness's reenactment of the event.

Last observed movements (vertical-horizontal-vertical). Suddenly a huge blast of air rushed out from the domed underside of the object sending pine needles flying about in all directions. The witness compared the blast of air to facing a stiff wind or standing about 50 feet from moving helicopter rotors. Concurrent with this blast of air was the same sound he had heard when it had ascended before but much louder. The loudness and pitch increased as the box-shaped craft ascended. He saw no lights, flame, or exhaust and smelled nothing unusual.

The object rose in a perfectly straight vertical fashion until it reached an altitude of about 10 feet. It then stopped for a split second—the loudness and pitch of the whining sound leveled off at this point—and then moved quickly on a perfectly straight horizontal course for about 24 feet. As it moved, the pitch and loudness of its noise remained the same. Saplings located directly under the object's flight path swayed as if the downward air blast were still continuing.

The witness saw and felt nothing that would indicate a sidewards propulsion blast. At this point, the object again

ORDER UFO TESTAMENT

Copies of Raymond Fowler's *UFO Testament: Anatomy of an Abductee* can be ordered directly from the author: Raymond Fowler, 249 Maguire Rd., Kennebunk, ME 04043. Cost is $29.95 postpaid and autographed.

stopped and swung around clockwise in mid-air for about 90 degrees before accelerating straight up and out of sight behind tree branches. He described the speed as being as fast as a solid-fuel ground-to-air missile.

Simultaneously with its final ascent was a great increase in the pitch and loudness of the whining sound. He heard the sound from above die down as if the object continued to recede away vertically.

On-site witness reenactment of this final vertical-horizontal-vertical maneuver from start to stop, before its final ascent, took only 2.5 seconds. This is important, as it seems as if the sound associated with this maneuver was what was heard by the witness's mother and sister, who were at a distance of about 800 feet away.

Witness reaction. Upon the object's departure, the boy immediately turned and ran home, shouting for his mother as he went. An on-site, timed reenactment of his run along the identical route took just about two minutes.

Audio witnesses. During the boy's encounter with the UFO, his mother had opened a window and was talking to her daughter, who was skating on some ice about 75 feet from the house. This window was facing in the general direction of the sighting area but was in under trees that blocked a clear view of the sky. Suddenly, both mother and daughter heard a strange whining sound fill the air. They told me that it sounded like "an elevator that started up, stopped at the second floor to pick up a passenger, and then restarted and moved non-stop all the way to the top floor."

Their description corresponded with the sound associated with the final maneuver of the UFO. Then, they told me, they could hear the son's voice yelling from up in the woods. He arrived out of breath and so excited that he could hardly talk. His mother told me that when he finally blurted out what he had seen, she warily followed him back to the sighting area.

Witnesses of physical traces. Upon arriving at the place where the object had been, they found a circular impression seemingly blown out of the heavily matted area of pine needles. It was about two feet in diameter, about four to six inches deep at the center, and shaped somewhat like a large, shallow bowl. Elongated impressions were visible around and outside of the depression's circumference.

The witness's mother told me that they resembled the impressions that a ruler might make if laid flat on the pine needles and pressed down about one inch. They then returned to the house, where she asked her son to draw a sketch and write out a description of what he had seen. She said his hands were literally shaking as he sat down at the kitchen table with pencil and paper.

The witness's father arrived home from work soon thereafter and found his son still at the table 45 minutes after the sighting. After being briefed on what had happened, he grabbed a Kodak Instamatic camera with flash attachment and went up to the site with his son and daughter. He took three photographs that turned out to be very poor.

The witness's father made the following observations about the physical traces and sighting area:

1. The center depression was perfectly smooth and rounded and had to be "mechanically made."
2. He saw no traces of foreign substances or scorching.
3. He sniffed around the markings but did not smell anything.
4. The round impression appeared to have been smoothly blown out of four inches of pine needles and two inches of earth.
5. He found a freshly broken twig about two feet long and about the diameter of a pen on the ground under the horizontal flight path of the object.
6. The object had been sitting under a near-solid canopy of white pine. It could not have come down from the sky through them but would have to have been intelligently guided down through, in, and under these pines, in just the reverse of the way it had left the area.
7. He expressed some dismay as to how an object of that size and corresponding weight could be lifted up by a reaction-type engine. There was no residue or scorched area and no violent markings such as would have been made by a jet engine.

Four days after the sighting occurred, the family's Saturday handyman was shown the markings. During my investigation, I questioned him. He confirmed the markings and told me that nothing grew in the disturbed area for about two years.

Sighting aftermath. After the father had interrogated his son, he phoned a friend of his who was acquainted with a state policeman in order to find out what the procedure was for reporting UFOs. The state police officer told his friend that they had been ordered to relay all such UFO reports directly to Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and then drop the matter. He advised against reporting the incident because the Air Force might ridicule the witness and the newspapers might somehow get hold of the story. He warned that any publicity would attract all kinds of publicity seekers to his property. That was enough for the witness's father. He never officially reported the bizarre episode.

During my investigation of the "The Flying Box," I researched NICAP files to ascertain if there were similar reports on record. I found only one other sighting description that was somewhat akin to it.

Young Michael B. had gone outside his home in Hubbard, Oregon, to let the cow out of her stall. His mother, Mrs. Leonard M. B., was inside the house. The time was about 7:30 a.m., May 19, 1964.

"I went to put the cow in the field," Mike said. "Usually she can't wait to get out there. . . . She was cross-wise in the stanchion and seemed very nervous. . . . She was bucking all the way." Then he saw a square object about four feet high. The silver-colored UFO was sitting in the middle of a wheat field. It had four shiny legs. "It started with a soft beep and started to go up," the boy told Marion County Deputy Sheriff Shirlie H. Davidson, who sent his official report to NICAP. "It went up slow until it got to about the height of

a telephone pole. Then it shot up just like a rocket."

Mike said the UFO emitted a smell like gas fumes as it rose. He then ran into the house. Mrs. B. said her son "had been very frightened and half-crying when he had made the report to her."

At about this time, Ray M., the family's carpenter, arrived on the scene. He went with the boy to the wheat field, and they found a spot where the wheat had been flattened out. "I would say the area was between three and four feet across," the carpenter stated, "with the wheat being pushed out in a flower-shaped pattern."

After being notified of the incident, Officer Davidson. also arrived on the scene and saw the flattened area. "The grain appeared to have been pushed down by some object," Davidson wrote in his report. "Three particular spots were noted. These were spaced about thirty-six inches apart." Later, an officer from Adair Air Force Base in Corvallis also inspected the site.

The similarities between the two sightings are striking. In both cases the witness was a young boy; the UFO was shaped like a box with a dome-like protrusion; the sightings took place in a rural area; the blown-out area included three impressions made by the object's legs; and both departed straight up like a rocket. It is possible that the differences in description were a result of witness error. The Oregon sighting did not take place at close range. It is perhaps significant that although Michael B. reported seeing four legs, only three depressions were found around the blown-out area at Hubbard, Oregon.

Abduction Wake-up Call

When I entered into the arena of UFO investigation back in 1963, I brought along a personal mindset influenced by my Christian faith and my newfound skeptical peers. Most of us at that time looked askance at certain types of UFO reports. Witnesses who reported repeated UFO sightings were thought to be hoaxers. Witnesses who reported psychic experiences were considered mentally unstable. In fact, at that time I considered psychic experiences evil due to my fundamentalist Christian beliefs.

Reports of paralyzing beams of light without the sighting of a UFO were often ignored. The reported UFO abduction by Barney and Betty Hill was looked upon with great suspicion. I remember going to hear them speak about their experience at the New England UFO Study Group with a friend. After they related their experience, I turned to him and said something like: "How can two seemingly nice people lie with a straight face?" So, it was no wonder that when reports of this nature came to my attention, I paid them little attention. I was only interested in investigating reports of unconventional machine-like objects reported by credible witnesses.

My wake-up call to consider putting aside my rigid prejudices occurred when one of my trusted investigators, Edward A., confessed that he had a bizarre experience a few weeks after he had sighted a large orange ball of light in the sky in June 1966. In fact, it was these two experiences that spurred him into becoming an investigator for the NICAP Massachusetts Subcommittee. Ed had told another of my investigators, Frank P., about his experiences. Frank, in turn, related them to me. The amazing thing was that this all came to light when I asked Ed to investigate a bizarre case involving an experience identical to his. It was just another of the amazing synchronisms that I have continually experienced along the UFO highway.

These two cases marked the beginning of the end of my prejudices against the UFO abduction phenomenon. I consider them significant milestones in the ever-evolving chronology of events that would lead to the unveiling of my own abduction experiences. Thus, I feel it necessary to go back in time and cover them both in some detail. I almost apologized for submitting these reports!

Excerpt from letter to NICAP, dated March 19, 1968, transmitting Edward A.'s report:

> I am rapidly coming to the conclusion that if the classical Mr. and Mrs. Barney Hill case is generally authentic and the more recent police officer Schirmer sighting in Nebraska on December 3, 1967 is valid, then many, many other low-level "conscious" encounters with UFOs may involve much more than appears on the surface. In other words, that contact has been made for some purpose on a different level of consciousness and in most cases the witnesses are not aware of it unless this is brought out by the use of hypnosis.

Edward A.'s account, March 21, 1968:

> As per your request, I have written the details, as best as I remember them concerning my puzzling experience with unusual lights in the night.
>
> As I informed you earlier, I cannot recall the exact date of the incident but am positive that it occurred sometime during the last two weeks of June 1966.
>
> I would first like to point out that there is no apparent connection between this incident and the UFO phenomenon. I made the association as the result of having seen what I believe to be a UFO on 16 June 1966 [a week earlier]. A report concerning that sighting was submitted to Frank P. on 23 April 1967, the long delay being due to reluctance on my part to discuss the occurrence.
>
> On the night in question, I awoke with a start and sat up on the edge of the bed. My bedroom was brilliantly illuminated as if it were full daylight. I had been having a problem in getting to work on time and my first thoughts were that I had overslept and that I was going to be late again. I looked at my wristwatch and saw that it read 3:15. Thinking it had stopped, I looked at the alarm clock and saw that it also read 3:15.
>
> I listened to my watch, making sure it was still running and was relieved to hear that it was. I then lay back down on the bed to go back to sleep but suddenly

realized that it should not have been light. I propped myself on my elbow, looked at my wife, who was asleep and then around the room. The shades were drawn on the windows so I could not see the sky or anything outside. I was bewildered and frightened by these unusual circumstances. As I looked at the windows, the light began to dim very slowly. I can remember thinking of the streetlight approximately 150 feet away across the street, and that it was far too dim to illuminate the room like that. The light continued to dim until the room was almost normally dark. The two front windows were still illuminated from the outside. The appearance of the windows was as though a light source were centered behind each shade. At this point I was badly frightened and trembling but determined to learn the cause of the light.

I started to get up and go to the windows when I heard a pinging sound. It seemed to come from the windows and was somewhat reminiscent of the sound made by the air compressors on the old streetcars when I was a child in Washington, D.C. (A close approximation would be a high-pitched but not shrill, *chinga-chinga-chinga-chinga.*)

I quickly looked up at the windows again still seeing the two bright areas on the shades and hearing the sound, but now there seemed to be diffraction rings around the lights moving outward concentrically.

My whole body began to grow numb and I fell back on the bed. The sensation subsided and I was determined to try again to get to the windows. As I arose, I again had the sudden numbing sensation, but this time I tried desperately to fight it and get to the window. The sound grew louder and I had the helpless feeling of going under anesthesia. The harder I fought, the more helpless I became.

My next conscious recollection is jumping out of bed and onto my feet. The room was illuminated with daylight. I looked quickly at the clock and saw that it was 6:15. I pulled up the shade and looked outside seeing that it was in fact daylight.

I thought back on the night before more than a little bewildered. I asked my wife if she recalled any strange lights during the night not revealing the details as I knew them. She did not.

In the next few days, I cautiously asked a few close neighbors if they had seen any unusual lights at night. All answered in the negative.

Because I had seen the UFO a week or so before, I somehow associated it with what had happened on that night. I was extremely nervous and on edge and completely preoccupied with thinking of the orange ball of light in the sky and the unusual light that illuminated my room at night. I became very touchy and sensitive and subject to periods of deep depression. I tried talking to a neighbor about the UFO but soon realized that not only he disbelieved me but that I was becoming the object of joking in the neighborhood. Even my wife looked oddly at me when I spoke about UFOs in general.

I stopped talking about them and began to read about them. I read such authors as John Fuller, Donald Menzel, Col. Tacker, Frank Edwards and Jacques Vallee, plus any and all articles appearing in periodicals. They helped me to realize that many others had suffered unexplainable experiences and that I was not alone.

My nervousness lasted for many months and it was only when I met Frank P. of NICAP, that I was able to talk about my experiences again. It was also about this time that I became interested in becoming a NICAP investigator and assisting in any way I could to finding a solution to the UFO phenomenon. Nothing remotely resembling this experience had happened to me before or since.

Addendum to account:

The following impressions or, if you will, mental pictures have lingered in my memory since early 1966. I do not know for sure that these recollections are anything more than hallucinations, dreams or the result of an over-stimulated imagination during my period of preoccupation with the subject of UFO's. I also do not know for certain the time I first remembered or thought of them. I am reasonably sure that they occurred to me sometime following the incident with the lights at night. I cannot even say that these mental pictures are clear sharp memory. They are actually hazy but invariant. They are like still pictures. I cannot recall or envision motion or action of some kind. It is difficult to describe but it feels like an outgoing feeling you have when you are young and in the presence of someone you admire very much and you want that person to be your friend and to like you. A sort of mixture of fear, admiration and apprehension.

There are two or perhaps three mental pictures involved. One is that of little people or creatures standing at the end of the hallway from my bedroom, that is, as though I were at my bedroom door looking down the hall. There seems to be a group of more than three but I cannot say how many.

These creatures seemed to be white all over. I cannot describe them beyond that except to say that their heads were relatively large and their faces relatively small. Their heads seemed bald. I cannot envision features. They were looking at me with both their heads leaned together as though they were discussing me.

The second and third mental pictures could be separate or they could be the same. I can envision my looking out of the small windows of my front door and seeing the same group standing outside close to the door. I can also envision my looking down at this same group standing beside me. They seemed to be looking up at me in side-glances but I cannot envision eyes. The little creatures

did have human form but were only chest high. On me that would be approximately 50 to 52 inches tall.

I must emphasize the fact that I do not recall any more than the above mental pictures. I do not know whether the pictures are a result of something real or imagined. I do not even know for certain when these mental pictures first occurred to me. I can only say that they are readily recalled by me and that they do not vary in the detail I have described above. I cannot put the pictures in any sort of order. That is, I don't not know that is first and that is last.

Bear in mind that back in 1968 there was little known about the UFO abduction phenomenon. Had I known what I know now about the benchmarks of abductions, Ed would have been a prime candidate for an extensive investigation that would include hypnotic regression sessions, examination of his body for scoop marks and other wounds typically found on abductees, etc. But, at the time, this was not the case. It would be a number of years down the road before the cause of Ed's experiences would become known.

The Burley Woods incident

Of all the places that I cherished most as a child were the trees, fields, ponds, and brooks of what was known as Burley Woods in Danvers, Massachusetts. Each season brought its own adventures. The smell of burning leaves and brilliant foliage heralded the beginning of hunting season. The winter's fresh falls of snow highlighted the footprints of a variety of woodland animals to track. Spring ended the long wait for fishing season to open and brought the melting of snow, rushing brooks, and ponds free of ice. Summer brought school vacation with so much time for woodland hikes and picnics. Today, most of the Burley Woods is a housing development. But I still find much delight in pouring over an old topographical map depicting how it was or taking walks within the few pockets of woods that still exist. It was within these beloved woods that the next remembered traumatic event took place.

I remember my after-school ritual as if it were yesterday: out of high school at two o'clock—home, changing clothes, and off to the woods around 2:45—walking down Day's hill—crossing the footbridge over the Danvers River—following the river until it met Frost Fish Brook that egresses from the Burley Woods into the river—crossing the brook over stepping stones—crossing back over by swinging over an over hanging tree branch—following the brook to a dirt road that encircled a pond sometimes called the Ice House although this building was long gone—walking down the dirt road and strolling through the meadows and woods for whatever adventures awaited me. On one of these typical days I encountered an adventure that I shall never forget.

It was a cool, fall day. I had just climbed up a grassy ridge onto the dirt road beside the pond. The sun was shining brightly. I felt invigorated by the cool, fresh air and elated about being out of school. Suddenly, I found myself standing beside the pond looking at the sun setting behind the trees. I was shocked and wondered how this could possibly be. I cannot really adequately describe the raw emotions that welled up inside me in that instant. I was filled with confusion, panic, and sheer raw terror. I had no idea what had happened. I next found myself running wildly homeward back through the woods, stumbling and flailing at bushes and tree limbs in my way. It was getting very dark as I ran all the way home. I burst into the house and into the kitchen, puffing and panting out of breath.

Mom was clearing the supper table and shouted angrily but in great relief, "Where have you been? We were just about to call the police!" I did not know what to say. All the way home I was trying to figure out what had happened to me. I had a nagging feeling that I had been lying down on the ground. But how could I explain to my parents that I apparently had somehow fallen asleep in the woods? All I could blurt out was that I had lost track of time. Perhaps connected with this event is memory of coming home one day with a bloody scoop mark dug into one of my ankles. I can remember my mother asking me how I did it. I answered that it must have been one of the snaps on my snap-up rubber boots. This was unsatisfactory to her and I can now see why. Whether this happened concurrently with the Burley Woods experience is the unanswered question. I seem to associate the two but cannot remember for sure.

In retrospect, later on in life, I conducted an analysis of the above scenario. Using a topographical map from that time period, I determined the compass direction of the road where the sun had set. It was WSW. I also used an almanac to check the time of sunset. Knowing what time we typically ate supper, I estimated that the date was probably around September 30, in 1948 or 1949. I would have been 14 or 15 years old.

In any event, I got out of school at 2:00 p.m. It took about 20–25 minutes to get home and another 15–20 minutes to change and start for the woods. This would mean that I would have left for the woods at about 2:45 and probably arrived at the pond/Ice House around 3:20. It could have been in September as I have this strong impression that I was only wearing a flannel shirt and no coat. More about that in a moment. Now, if it were, say, September 30, it would still be daylight savings time and the sun would not have set until 6:28. This would mean that I would have experienced over three hours of missing time, because when I finally got out of the woods it was pitch dark. It must have been well after 7:00 p.m. to have been so dark. Now, to get back to what clothes I was wearing at the time.

It is interesting to note that almost every time that I walked along that road in the future, I received a fleeting memory of myself in a flannel shirt lying on the grass beside the pond. What was weird was that I visualized myself lying on the ground from a point above the ground. Years later, I would have a terrifying experience that would confirm this

(continued on page 26)

TAKEN DOWN UNDER:

THE AUSTRALIAN ABDUCTION EXPERIENCE

BY BILL CHALKER

The Australian introduction to the abduction experience began, like the American, with John Fuller's book about the Hill abduction case. Fuller's 1966 best-selling book *The Interrupted Journey* was serialized in a number of Australian newspapers, including the *Sydney Sun-Herald*, during September and October 1966. This was Australians' first exposure to the UFO abduction story. It came headlined, "We Were Kidnapped by a Flying Saucer Crew!"

What impact did it have at the time? Other than generating interest in the book and the topic, we can be sure of one thing. No stories like it emerged in Australia via public outlets such as the media, nor did UFO researchers of the day become aware of any similar tales of a home-grown variety. Papers also carried articles such as "Here Come the Humanoids," based on the October/November 1966 *The Humanoids* special issue of the British *Flying Saucer Review* (*FSR*). It provided our first real exposure to the earlier exotic abduction experience of Brazilian Antonio Villas-Boas. The classic book *The Humanoids*, edited by *FSR* editor Charles Bowen, would follow in 1969.

From my perspective, there have been four clear phases of development in the Australian abduction experience:

- Phase 1: pre-1978—Early developments
- Phase 2: 1978–1987—Preliminary emergence
- Phase 3: 1988–1990—The *Communion* phase
- Phase 4: 1991to date—Emergence

PHASE 1: EARLY DEVELOPMENTS

Phase 1 was characterized by a lack of clear-cut abductions in the Australian region, although there were some suggestive cases.

Abduction stories from Australia would remain hidden or absent for many years. Indeed, Alan Hendry said in his excellent *UFO Handbook* that "There are CEIII [UFO-entity close encounter] cases in Australia, but there, researchers note the lack of contact, time lapse, and abduction cases among them." His statement was based on a UFO conference paper I presented in November 1977 titled "Beyond the CE3 Down Under: Notes on the Apparent Absence of Contact, Time-Lapse and Abduction Cases in Australia." I had stated, "Upon first inspection, we appear to have a complete absence of 'time-loss,' 'abduction' contact cases. Keith Basterfield, myself and others have demonstrated that Australia does have a considerable body of entity accounts, and yet none of them demonstratively show 'contact' aspects about them. We do not have any objective encounters of the calibre of the Hills . . . of the Schirmer/Ashland case, the Travis Walton affair, Pascagoula, and the like."

I described a number of peripheral contact-type cases, but none involved explicit abductions, although Maureen Puddy had a "psychic abduction" in the presence of two experienced UFO investigators (Judy Magee and Paul Norman of the Victorian UFO Research Society) during 1973. (Later, others would latch onto this affair to argue that abduction experiences were a thing of the mind, as both Magee and Norman witnessed nothing more than a clearly agitated and seemingly sincere Maureen Puddy during her "abduction" right before them.) Also, the Canberra "snails" affair in 1974 involved a bizarre car-control aspect against the will of the two women involved.

Despite the ambiguous status of Puddy's experience, Magee's 1978 account of the incident in *FSR* was the earliest published abduction story from Australia. At the same time, the mysterious disappearance of pilot Frederick Valentich in October 1978 over Bass Strait, in the wake of a UFO encounter, was characterized by some as an in-flight abduction. The Valentich affair was a huge media story in the mainstream press.

Although in 1976 I published an account of the Canberra snail encounter in *FSR* ("Road Hazard Down Under?"), the experience was so strange that it is difficult to know how to categorize it. Therefore, I'm reluctant to call it Australia's first reported account of an alien abduction. Judge for yourself.

I learned of this strange story originally from a friend of one of the two witnesses. I was never able to directly confirm the details with the witness, Heather, because every time she was asked to talk about the incident, she would reexperience a severe speech impediment. This may have been graphic evidence of the traumatic impact of the original episode.

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Ethically, I refrained from pressing Heather for details, but one hopes with the passage of time she may eventually come to terms with the events.

The incident took place in about 1974. Two young women were relaxing in their Canberra residence. They heard a strange, seemingly entrancing sound, and claimed they then felt compelled to go outside to their car. According to the account, their car "drove itself" to a remote site outside Canberra, all the way being escorted by a brilliant aerial light source. Upon stopping, a weird chant started up, which seemed to be coming from a point behind their car. The two women could apparently make out vague human forms at that spot. At this point both women felt overwhelmed by their greatest personal fears. For one it was of experiencing sudden and imminent death, and for the other it was of being violently raped.

Heather then, apparently involuntarily, got out of the car. What followed is unclear, but she recollects that for a few minutes she was unable to get back into the car. What seemed to have prevented her was the presence of a viscous, sticky, white material like spider web that was all over the car door. Eventually Heather was able to get back inside. Now they found that whatever control was exerted over them and their car had ceased. In an understandably disturbed state the couple then made their way to the local police station. The police apparently believed at least part of their bizarre story, for it was revealed that police patrols had observed strange lights in the sky during the evening, and one patrol had come across a massive procession of snails crossing the road and ostensibly heading in the general direction of the site of the strange encounter. The police might have linked the massive snail procession to the viscous material on the car door. The women returned to the site with police, but after nothing was found they were escorted back to their home.

Things did not end there. After the police left, the women reported that the whole sequence of bizarre events repeated itself, except for one significant difference. The fear that dominated the first events was replaced by guilt—as if they had "betrayed a trust" by informing the police.

The aftermath of the experience was particularly devastating on Heather. She developed a severe speech impediment and lost some basic skills, such as writing. Her friend, who had apparently stayed in the car, seemed to have no lasting adverse effect. By 1976, Heather had recovered from most of the distressing ailments she experienced in the wake of her rather harrowing nocturnal encounter. However, with the temporary reoccurrence of Heather's speech impediment each time the incident was relived, detailed confirmation of this striking tale has so far remained elusive.

Australian Aborigines and Abductions

Although I highlighted the apparent absence of Australian abduction stories up to 1977 in my conference paper, I did draw attention to the fact that "Australia, unbeknown to most researchers enjoyed a rich indigenous tradition of similar accounts . . . the tribal initiation accounts of aboriginal medicine men—men of 'high degree' as A. P. Elkin aptly puts it. These aboriginal 'shaman' have a powerful and consistent tradition of ritualistic initiation, the elements of which bear amazing similarities to modern day UFO abduction and contact accounts." I returned to this theme in some detail in an article I wrote for the August 1990 *Nature and Health* magazine, "Alien Abductions: A Shamanic Perspective of UFOs." (This article is available on my website at www.theozfiles.com/ufo_shaman.html.) Although some of the material I present below is from after 1978, given the antiquity of the aboriginal historical traditions, I include their accounts in this section.

The Australian aboriginal shamans—"clever men" or "men of high degree"—described celestial ascents to meet with such sky gods as Baiame, Biral, Goin, and Bundjil. The aboriginal shamanic "experience of death and rising again" in the initiation of tribal men of high degree finds some fascinating parallels with modern-day UFO abduction lore. The chosen one (either voluntarily or spontaneously) is set upon by spirits, ritualistically killed, and then experiences a wondrous journey (generally an aerial ascent to a strange realm) to meet the sky god. He is restored to life, a new life as the tribal shaman.

Ritual death and resurrection, abduction by powerful beings, ritual removal or rearrangement of body parts, symbolic disembowelment, implanting artifacts, aerial ascents and journeys into strange realms, alien tutelage and enlightenment, personal empowerment, and transformation—these and many other phenomena are recurring elements of the extraordinary shamanic tradition.

Elkin pointed out one particularly evocative example of shamanic lore: "Amongst the powers of the Mara medicine-men is that of climbing at night by means of a rope invisible to ordinary mortals up to the sky, where he can hold converse with the star people."

Mircea Eliade quotes A. W. Howitt's *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia* (1904) where he recounts the initiation of a Wiradjuri medicine man:

> We will go up to Baiames camp. He got astride of a Muir (thread) and put me on another, and we held by each other's arms. At the end of the thread was Wombu, the bird of Baiame. We went through the clouds, and on the other side was the sky. We went through the place where the Doctors go through, and it kept opening and shutting very quickly. My father said that, if it touched a Doctor when he was going through it would hurt his spirit and when he returned home, he would sicken and die. On the other side we saw Baiame sitting in his camp.

Because of the many similarities between elements of shamanic initiation experiences, modern UFO abduction and contact narratives, and even near-death accounts, the modern travelers of what may be the same realm could be

seen as potential "cosmic shamans" of the UFO abduction and contact genres. Because modern society has not recognized the utility of the shamanic experience in interpreting the significance of these contemporary alien visions, their percipients are seldom able to recognize the possible lengthy tradition of their experiences. It should be said, however, that many UFO abduction researchers do not accept this interpretation and instead contend we are dealing with bonafide extraterrestrial abductors. Needless to say, a sizeable part of the general community completely rejects any arguments for the reality of these experiences. Whatever the eventual explanation, it is impossible to ignore the parallels between traditional shamanic initiation experiences and contemporary UFO abduction and contact reports.

I have already shown that abduction by powerful spirits is a strong and enduring motif in aboriginal myths and legends. So too is the theme of sexual harassment and molestation by powerful beings from above. For example, anthropologists Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen recorded in their 1899 study that the aboriginal men of the Aranda tribe in the southern portion of the Northern Territory believed that at one time the moon man lived on earth. A pancake-shaped (or, it could be said, disc or saucer-shaped) boulder, approximately two feet wide, in the western Aranda territory, was pointed out as the place where the moon man once rested. The Ngatadjara tribe of the Warburton ranges, in the central-west portion of Western Australia, had a myth that described how a group of women, the Kunkarunkara, were protected from the unwelcome attentions of the moon man Kula. Another variation indicates they were being continuously pursued, and occasionally raped, by Jula, a man of the constellation of Orion. The women, legend has it, finally escaped into the sky and became the Pleiades.

An Australian anthropologist, Hannah Wolfe, who has done extensive fieldwork at Western Australian aboriginal sites, has written that aboriginals have probably been visited by extraterrestrials. She took a trip to the Northern Territory, with veteran investigator Paul Norman during 1992 to look into a contemporary report of a UFO sighting over an aboriginal community on one of the islands off Arnhem Land, west of Kakadu National Park.

After talking to aboriginal people and examining their art, Wolfe had already concluded that elements of their culture seemed to reflect the possibility that extraterrestrials may have contacted indigenous peoples during their long stay in Australia. Wolfe suggests that evidence for this may possibly be seen in the Wandjina tradition and in a faded cave painting in southern Australian, which depicts a circular, striated image with what may be rays coming out of one side. The cave is linked to a tradition involving a man who came from the moon. While on Earth he lived in the cave. He eventually departed his cave through a hole in the roof and returned to the moon.

The report Paul Norman had received described a silver, elongated object that hovered over the area until an aircraft appeared. Norman and Wolfe were not allowed to visit the area, according to local administrative officers. On the border of Arnhem Land and Kakadu National Park, Wolfe was told by a local aboriginal elder, Joseph, that a community to the southwest had once been forced to run from a UFO encounter. At another place, Joseph indicated that aliens had abducted an aboriginal child. The two-year-old had not returned. Norman and Wolfe visited the isolated, riverside community referred to by Joseph. A local man, Steven, told them that when he was a boy on a station in the area, he had witnessed a UFO landing. A woman there allegedly received a telepathic message from the alien beings that they wanted to take her. The UFO left without the woman when the station manager emerged with a gun. The object left behind a physical trace of its landing—a circle on the ground—which according to Steven can still be seen.

Hannah Wolfe's information was described in two articles she wrote ("Trip to the Northern Territory," *Australian UFO Bulletin*, December 1992, and "Australia's Aborigines Have Long Known about UFOs," *FSR* 39, no.3, 1994).

John Kernott, who had a mail run in the Kimberleys, has heard a lot of strange stories from aboriginals. He told me of tales of sexual contact of an abduction kind that were apparently very common among aboriginal women in the Great Sandy and Central Deserts. Since about 1986, Central Desert aboriginal women have told him of "feather foot" spirits (which do not walk on the ground, they walk in the air; they can move through walls and things; they can come and punish people), and he connected them with possible UFO abduction situations. They talk about waking up and spirits having sex with them, having babies, and no baby ever comes. Often their stomachs swelled up, then went down. Their sexual assailants were often described as being like "men in black." It was often hard to see their eyes. Phantom or false pregnancies, or missing foetuses feature in UFO abduction lore. The concept of "spirit children" is also widespread. Such comparisons are fascinating, but ultimately they are difficult to interpret, given the cultural filtering and distortion that is likely in such an isolated culture.

Some of this information argues for a literal extraterrestrial interpretation of such stories, but one should be careful not to uproot such tales from the cultural setting they emerged from and to stamp them with western cultural imperatives, such as our fascination with extraterrestrials and their possible relevance to UFO experiences. This caution is particularly relevant to the tribal legends and oral traditions. Even though similarities occur between, say, UFO abduction stories and the shamanic experiences of aboriginal men of high degree, literal interpretations may be incorrect. Instead of extraterrestrials we may be dealing with something else. The perspectives offered by indigenous cultures such as Australian aborigines may support other interesting possibilities. Such experiences may be about the effect that subtle forces have on humans. Fascinating work is being done on the effects of the natural land-

scape, places of power (locations of unusual natural energies), hallucinogens, our modern electromagnetic environment, and so-called "earth lights." These are areas rich in possibilities for the extraordinary worlds of UFO and alien abduction experiences. The popular acceptance of a literal extraterrestrial explanation may be premature or incorrect.

I have talked to a number of people about this sort of perspective. Robert Lawlor, author of *Voices of the First Day: Awakening in the Aboriginal Dreamtime* (Inner Traditions International, 1991), provided me with some interesting insights. He told me that he had come across abduction stories in at least three aboriginal areas: the Kimberleys, the Nowra area, and Bathurst Island. In each case, they were linked with initiation procedures and were associated with particular places known to be highly charged with spiritual force. Such abductions by powerful spiritual beings were sometimes provoked as a legitimate or fulfilling part of a young male's initiation. Such events are certainly part of the initiations of tribal shamans.

It is well known that such experiences occur in initiation ceremonies. Lawlor had his longest conversations on this theme in the Nowra area of New South Wales, with a full-blood aboriginal elder who was passing on the traditions and memories of his father. He talked about a cave opening from where young boys were said to have been taken by a spirit, after which they had to endure fearful sights, without loss of courage, as part of their initiation rituals. Outside of these rituals, the boys knew to stay away from the cave site. Lawlor suggested that this might have been enhanced by the "natural telluric ambience" of such sites as researchers like Paul Devereux have suggested.

These experiences parallel UFO abduction tales, but the extraterrestrial perspective is a technologically oriented metaphor or explanation, suggests Lawlor. The ET perspective plays into the vanities of the modern evolutionary worldview. That perspective is the preferred propaganda in our western world. The indigenous view (the shamanic world) validates the realities and the cultural development of nature-harmonized peoples. The former is more palatable in the western technological setting. Lawlor suggested the rash of modern UFO abduction experiences may in part be due to the effects of intensification of industrial energies or electromagnetic pollution on our neural modalities, and the indigenous accounts may be due to abnormalities in the electromagnetic ambience of the natural landscape, enhanced during initiation procedures and ceremonies. All this tells us that there are many perspectives to examine when considering UFO experiences, beyond the obvious mainstream appeal of the extraterrestrial hypothesis.

In his 1995 book *Mysterious Australia*, mysteries researcher Rex Gilroy records an intriguing tale allegedly from 1933 that involved an aboriginal woman in a UFO abduction experience at the isolated locality of Discovery Well, on the northern edge of the Great Sandy Desert, in Western Australia. This has an interesting resonance with the stories John Kernott told me in 1993, some of which were located in the Great Sandy Desert. The Discovery Well story echoes the tribal legends and traditions of men and women being abducted by sky gods or culture heroes in the dreamtime and the initiation experiences of aboriginal men of high degree or shamans.

In Gilroy's account, the aboriginal woman claimed her tribe had been frightened off from Discovery Well when a "large shiny egg" suddenly came down out of the sky. In broad daylight the strange object flew low over them. Several beings, described as strange, gray-skinned, and manlike, came out of the egg. The woman said she was stunned by an object carried by one of the beings. Her story indicates she was carried aboard. Inside the egg, the interior was glowing. She was strapped to a shining table and apparently "experimented with." The woman told stockmen of her experience, but perhaps not surprisingly they laughed at her.

This 1933 tale also anticipates the spate of UFO abduction tales that would virtually dominate the UFO landscape by the 1990s. It was not until 1957 that the sexual abduction experience of Antonio Villas-Boas from Brazil occurred. The famous Betty and Barney Hill abduction story in the United States did not take place until 1961. Neither story was well known until the mid-1960s.

In 2003, Gilroy described another story of aboriginal abductions. This one apparently occurred a year earlier—1932—but on the other side of Australia outside Charters Towers, in central Queensland. An aboriginal woman, Nellie Stewart, was out hunting for "bush tucker." She reported that several "men in metallic clothes" came out of the scrub, dragged her into "a large gleaming silver craft," flew her into the sky, experimented on her, finally returning her to the locality where she was originally captured.

Such stories were not circulating among UFO researchers in the seventies, so in 1977 I had concluded, "Thus while a hidden body of data of the contact, abduction and time-lapse variety may exist in Australia today, we really only have a few cases which in certain aspects reflect these factors as well as a remarkable aboriginal tradition of such cases. The latter because of their mystical shamanistic framework really eludes definitive correlations with the contemporary UFO contact tradition."

Phase 2: Preliminary Emergence

In October 1979, I reported on several Australian "interrupted journeys" that started to surface, but still none were unambiguous abduction accounts.

I returned to the abduction theme in 1980 with my presentation of research into the 1868 "UFO vision" of Frederick William Birmingham, pointing out "many aspects of the Birmingham vision are common to the rich harvest of 'contactee' stories of the 1950s, other 'contact' tales and even 'abductions,' including 'invitation,' 'levitation,' a tour of the aerial 'machine' ('a machine to go through the air'), 'alien tutelage', possible ESP, precognition, disorientation,

and bizarre 'follow-up' experiences." I contended then, and still do now, that the 19th-century Birmingham case embodied many of the features of modern-day UFO experiences, concluding, "The specific content may differ, but the basic components of these visions will be the same for 'Aboriginal men of high degree,' a Parramatta surveyor in 1868, or 20th-century UFO 'abductees.'" (The 1868 "UFO vision" milieu is described in an article on my website at www.theozfiles.com/1868.html. I also had an article on the affair, "Encounter in the Outback," published in *Fortean Times* 162 (September 2002). The Internet TV show I cohost on Banana TV features two episodes devoted to the 1868 incident.)

With Phase 2, we see that cases began to be uncovered. In April 1982, Keith Basterfield documented a 1981 case from near Whyalla, South Australia, but the onboard details were vague and fragmentary. The September 1982 issue of the VUFORS *Australian UFO Bulletin* published a recently acquired account of a 1956 abduction of a 12-year-old girl from a farm near Hughenden in central Queensland. The woman described her recollections of how as a child she had been crossing a paddock when she felt a strange force upon her. She felt as if she was being lifted off the ground. As she tried to see what was above her, she lost consciousness. The girl awoke to find herself in a strange, large room with two men in silver-white suits. After surveying the room, which featured a colored galaxy display on one wall, the girl felt enormous pressure and again lost consciousness. She found herself back at the farm, but in a different paddock, with a huge saucer-shaped object hovering above her before it subsequently ascended rapidly to the west. The girl determined that two hours had elapsed since she initially lost consciousness.

During 1984 I received details of the following case. It too occurred during the 1950s. At Moe, Victoria, in about 1958, a young girl saw a strange flying craft head down into a nearby forest during the night. She went to investigate. She remembers encountering "a small man" working on the outside of a strange object, and being signaled to stay away. The girl recalls experiencing a ride, in what she called a "wizzie," ostensibly in the object she had seen, and seeing a aerial view of her home town, seen through the floor of the UFO. She does not recollect how she got home, but clearly remembers getting a spanking from going to bed with dirty feet and soiling the sheets. Her left knee had been grazed. Years later, while sharing a house in Melbourne, she and her housemate experienced unusual auditory and visual contacts and communications, seemingly like a bizarre form of channeling. The intelligences that came through in this strange form of contact, in which one woman controls the visual "reception" and the other the audio dimension, referred to the woman's childhood experience in Moe.

In the September 1983 issue of the *Australian UFO Bulletin*, Colin Norris first revealed details of his investigation of a bizarre case. During January 1974, Ben, a 38-year-old, was out searching for fossils in the remote Clifton Bore area of the Sturts Stony Desert with a female companion. Ben told the woman to stay near the car because she was unfamiliar with the area, while he searched wider afield.

During the afternoon, when he was about two kilometers from the car, he was suddenly approached by two beings who were only about one meter in height. They were human-looking in many respects, with short hair, but with elongated heads at the rear, rather like a beehive effect. The length of their arms seemed much shorter than the normal proportions of the body. Their faces were normal but they spoke in a rapid unintelligible fashion. They wore silver diver-suit-like garments. They beckoned him to follow, and they came to a silver-colored "hot dog" roll–shaped object, about 7.5 meters long and 1.4 meters high. Ben could not understand how he had not seen this object before. The beings beckoned him to enter. He bent down to do so and was faced with a bizarre spatial anomaly that would do Dr. Who's Tardis proud. While small from the outside, inside it was vast. He said that inside space meant nothing. There were many more similar beings inside, who were apparently female. Ben was offered a drink. Scared to refuse, he did so and passed out. When he regained consciousness he was lying on the floor of the craft. The two beings were still with him. He gained a sense of having been rejected for some purpose. Apart from his companions, he was ignored.

He was very disturbed by what he saw next. Two Caucasian-looking girls, apparently human, dressed normally, and ostensibly about 8 or 9, and 12 or 13, were in something like a cage. They seemed to be in a trance. As a father of five children, Ben found this situation very upsetting. Presently, the open doorway appeared again and given his acute uncertainty about his circumstances, he stepped out. He found himself on the desert ground again. He simply walked away. Back at the car and with his companion, he discovered an hour and a half had gone by. He was very unsettled by this bizarre experience, and very troubled by the presence of the two girls.

This troubling element of apparently human children inside UFOs, unsettling as it is unbelievable, is not unique. One case investigated by Keith Basterfield, then with UFO Research Australia (UFORA), involved a Karoonda, South Australia, woman who experienced some sort of time loss in her own house during 1977. She had a sense of being in a strange room with a large number of normal people. She saw a young girl, who was about 10 or 11. This girl said her younger brother and sister were also with her. She enjoyed being with people in another room who were in period costume. The woman asked if the girl wanted to go with her, but she said her time was nearly up. Her name was Arna.

This tale evokes the missing Beaumont children, but there are discrepancies, and besides no one would give credence to such a bizarre connection. In 1989 she had another missing-time episode, again in her house. After travelling through a strange tunnel she found herself in the same environment she had been in 12 years earlier. This time there are no humans present. A number of strange alien

beings were—grays. Some were carrying babies or tiny replicas of themselves. One in particular was the focus of the woman. The being didn't speak. The baby had its arms out. The woman asked to hold it. The being then took it back. This bizarre "baby presentation" element is a feature of a number of abduction episodes from the United States, particularly after Budd Hopkins's book on this theme came out. The woman said she had not read either Hopkins's or Whitley Strieber's books.

Colin Norris also looked into the strange early 1979 experience of Jack and Don, at Nildottie, South Australia. They operated a mail run together. For some time they had been experiencing problems with their TV antenna being twisted around, and the cause eluded them. One evening the Venetian blinds went up and down (on their own). They went outside to look and were approached by European-looking people, both male and female. They appeared to be wearing woollen jumpers. A "torchlight" was shone on them that made the two men feel calm. They were taken over to a mound of gravel adjacent to which a craft was located. The men were taken inside. It was cold and the beings apparently agreed to escort them back to the house to get jumpers. They were not allowed to take food. The UFO then took off. As it rose, they saw their TV antenna twist round! They could see across the Murray River as they rose up. Don, the younger of the two, was given strange repetitive tests. They were returned after seven hours. When a neighbour visited them and found them confused and carrying on, police were called in. The two men were taken to Meadows hospital. They seemed to be suffering from yellow jaundice and eye problems. Both men passed away within two years of the encounter.

Editor's Note: Part 2 of this article will discuss abductions in Australia in the wake of the great publicity from Whitley Strieber's book Communion, *and show how cases emerged into public view in the 1990s.* ✦

FLYING BOX—*continued from page 20*

then-inexplicable impression.

For some reason, the Burley Woods incident faded from my memory as I passed out of my teens. It wasn't until years later that my study of UFO abduction cases involving missing time caused my memory to flash back to that traumatic day in the Burley Woods. Later, I could not understand how I could have forgotten this incident and I wondered if I were imagining things. However, years later when I mentioned it to my brother Dick, he said that he remembered the incident well. He even knew where he was standing in the pantry when I rushed into the kitchen. He related to me how upset my parents were getting as time went by and I had not come home. After darkness fell, he confirmed that they were just about to call the police. You have no idea what a relief it was to me when I discovered that this nagging memory was real. ✦

ARTHUR KILL—*continued from page 6*

The witnesses I interviewed thought that 30 to 50 people viewed the event from the Waterloo Café. Unfortunately, only the employees came forward to report the sighting. The crowd included off-duty Coast Guard personnel, who would have been excellent observers. Unfortunately, to my knowledge none have ever been interviewed. I have uncovered the names and ranks of two Coast Guard personnel who were present at the café, and said to have been baffled and excited by the sighting. These men are members of an elite strike force unit, similar to a SWAT team. They can be sent anywhere at anytime. They are virtually impossible to reach.

The sightings reported by Carol K. and her daughter Jaimie and the café workers may be one and the same, thereby verifying one another. Looking south as they drove along the West Shore Expressway, Carol and Jamie's line of sight placed the lights above the landfill. However, an extension of that line would place the lights at the café's location. The puzzling aspect of the story is that the mother and daughter saw 12 to 14 lights 45 degrees above the horizon. Reports from the café state there were never more than six lights seen at relatively low altitudes. Either there were two separate sightings over the same area at different times, or Chris B. spotted the lights after at least half had already "turned off." The altitude discrepancy may have been due to the observer's perspective. This is purely my speculation.

There were probably more witnesses to the event who did not make a report either for fear of ridicule or because they did not know where to report their sighting. One piece of information did find its way to me in a most roundabout way. The day after the newspaper article appeared that gave my name and office phone number, I received a call from, of all places, Florida. On the afternoon of July 15, only hours after the Arthur Kill sightings, a daylight sighting had occurred. The caller, *Adele M.,* had been visiting her son and his family on Staten Island. Having returned from a trip to Atlantic City earlier that Sunday, Adele, her son Edward, and 6-year-old grandson James, decided to do a bit of sunbathing in the back yard. The boy was the first to notice the unusual sky display. He pointed it out to his grandmother and father. Adele described diamond-shaped, bright-silver objects in formation high in the sky. She believes there were 16 to 20 objects in groups of four or five, and others alone, as they occasionally passed behind the clouds. Adele's interesting observation and impression was that the objects could link up side to side, creating a larger object. The time of the sighting was thought to be about 2:30 or 3:00 p.m.

During a phone conversation with Edward, he struggled for a good example of the object's shape. After listening to his description, I suggested a teardrop, rounded at one end, coming to a point at the other. He agreed. Edward then recalled only seeing a diamond formation of four followed by one or two. He thought the objects floated like balloons,

not displaying any erratic movements. Edward also mentioned that they passed behind the clouds. The direction of the objects was east to west; they were visible for about 10 minutes. Adele thought they moved west to east, but her son implied she had a poor sense of direction. Of course, there is no way we can positively link the Arthur Kill sightings some 14 hours earlier with the Sunday afternoon sighting. Either one or both could have a mundane explanation or be truly anomalous. However, the similarities are intriguing.

Planes, flares, other impossibilities

The sightings do not appear to have been misidentifications of conventional aircraft. It was a clear, calm night. The sound of aircraft engines would have been readily discernable, but no sound was heard. Staten Island is in the flight path of three major airports, Newark, JFK, and LaGuardia. Private planes fly out of Teterboro and Linden airports in New Jersey. Aircraft of all types are a common everyday sight over Staten Island. Commercial jets in the landing pattern of Newark Airport were seen in the distance and easily identifiable, and distinguishable from the phenomenon. At the Waterloo Café the lights were low enough to illuminate the ground. Several helicopters would be required to accomplish this feat. Flying helicopters at night in formation would not only be extraordinarily dangerous; the noise would be unmistakable.

The lights had none of the characteristics of meteors. The typical meteor is the size of a cigarette ash. It is a short-lived phenomenon that glows for a few seconds as it rubs against the molecules of our atmosphere before burning up. This doesn't even come close to what eyewitnesses described.

I considered the possibility of space debris. However, the appearance of the phenomenon is not consistent with space debris. Anyone who has viewed the tragic final moments of the space shuttle *Columbia* breakup knows what space debris looks like. NORAD has confirmed no debris reentered the Earth's atmosphere that morning.

Weather balloons do not pulsate, cast weird light that illuminates the ground, or fly in formation at low altitudes. Moreover, since there was no wind, balloons would not have been blown around and moved in the way described by the witnesses.

Hoax balloons of the dry-cleaning-bag variety, popular in the 1960s, have also been suggested. No witness I interviewed saw wax dripping from the lights or flaming objects dropping from the sky. Dry-cleaning bags don't fly in formation anyway, and again, there was no wind to move the balloons through the sky.

The most ludicrous explanation came from NASA several days after the event. The local WNBC news channel supplied them with a copy of the videotape from Carteret. I can only assume the Air Force is tired of coming up with dumb answers and somehow tossed the hot potato to NASA. In their infinite wisdom, NASA declared flares dropped by the National Guard or a private pilot might be the answer. Case closed. This claim was made despite the fact that an Air Force spokesperson from McGuire Air Force Base had stated from the very beginning that no military exercise was underway at the time.

The flare scenario is a very scary thought. I was not familiar with military flares, so I did some research. Military flares such as LUU-2 and LUU-19 are used for target illumination and rescue. They weigh roughly 33 pounds and are three and two feet in length respectively. They can be launched from many types of aircraft, even by hand. The flare candle burns magnesium at a very high temperature. Although at times the lights had the characteristics of flares, I do not believe they were flares. Any military commander authorizing an airborne operation utilizing flares in one of the busiest air corridors in the world above oil refining and storage facilities would have to be insane. Imagine a flare being sucked into a commercial jet engine causing it to crash into an oil storage tank. Think of any number of possible disastrous scenarios. The thought of a military exercise is preposterous. No aircraft were seen or heard. Flares produce smoke and have parachutes, neither of which was visible to any witness. The idea that a private pilot might be responsible is just as foolish. Boat and road flares don't resemble anything like what was observed.

Finally, the conjecture of experimental aircraft being tested in a busy air corridor over heavily populated areas is also beyond belief.

To the best of my ability, I believe I have exhausted all possible manmade and natural explanations. Unless a well-funded organization mounts an intensive investigation of this matter and proves differently, these sightings must be categorized as unknown.

In summation, I would like to make a final observation. Late on the night of July 14, 2001, and into the early morning hours of July 15, something as yet unexplained manifested itself in highly sensitive airspace over the New York/New Jersey border. It is now known that unknown targets without transponders, some at heights of 99,000 feet, were picked up on radar at Newark International Airport. This is less than 20 miles from Manhattan. The media, the military, and the police treated it as good summertime fun not worthy of serious consideration. I can only imagine how humorous they would have found the situation had the sighting occurred September 15 instead of that clear, calm July night when we still believed our country would always be safe and secure. ✦

QUOTE OF THE SEASON

On the twelfth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me
Twelve ETs watching, Eleven close encounters, Ten telepathy thoughts, Nine spaceships speeding, Eight saucers a-flying, Seven witnesses a-talking, Six alien sightings, Five abduction experiences, Four flashing lights, Three extraterrestrials, Two flying disks, and a UFO in the night sky.

—"The Twelve Encounters of Christmas," ebe-ufos.tripod.com/UFO_alien_fun.html

ENIGMA VARIATIONS—*continued from page 11*

Except for airship close-encounter reports, CE3s as we understand them are hard to come by. Accounts of entities—otherworldly beings—are far less rare. Many are traditional tales of ghosts and haunted houses, which will not concern us here. Others contain CE3 elements without ever resolving into fully realized CE3s, as often as not turning in weird, unexpected directions. At best they're proto-CE3s, yet no less interesting for that.

ENTITIES

The first of these does involve the appearance, at least initially, of a UFO-like phenomenon but soon develops into the sort of aerial visions familiar from medieval chronicles but even centuries later, well into the 19th, not wholly unknown. This story, reprinted from the Brethren in Christ magazine *Evangelical Visitor*, appeared in the *Woodland Daily Democrat* (October 3, 1894) and other newspapers:

> In the way of seeing sights and viewing visions a Dickinson county [Kansas] farmer has laid claim to first prize. He has a statement that is not only unique in every respect, but is told with startling attention to detail. H. W. J. Smith, a long time resident of the county, living seven or eight miles from town . . . [attests in] an affidavit a story of his strange visitation. He says that in company with B. W. Blue, a neighboring farmer, a few nights ago he stepped out of the house at Andrew Thompson's, three miles from Manchester and 15 from Abilene. As they looked at the sky, which was clear, suddenly something like a large luminous ball appeared in the northeast about 30 degrees above the eastern horizon.

As they wondered whether it was a meteor or a comet, the object almost immediately shot toward the west three degrees, then returned to its original position. Then, in Smith's words:

> It opened as a casket with a hinge, presenting on its right a cross—most beautiful, golden, corrugated and furbished. At the left of this was a living man clad in citizen's style, with a plain crown on his head. His form was symmetrical, his countenance bright and permissive—a perfect son of man.
>
> The casket closed, and away it went to the eastern horizon like a meteor. There it oscillated as if for a time to be emptied and refilled, returning on the same path to its original place. It opened, presenting a portly man, with sword and scabbard on his thigh, a cross on his breast and on his head a crown of many glittering jewels, like stars. He looked beautiful, but was partly hidden by an obtrusive rider on a black or dark horse.
>
> These were hidden or overshadowed by a haughty woman in costly royal attire, who seemed to rule over both. Then these were eclipsed by the coming of a military leader with sword in right hand, elevated ready to strike, the scabbard cast away, a cross on his right breast and a square and compass on his left. On his head was a military hat, the crown blended with the man's hair. On each side of the man's head was a horn, and a cross was erect behind him. He stepped out and forth and began action, never stopping to rest or turning his back on the enemy. He retreated eastward to within about five degrees of the horizon, then began to advance with heavy martial tread, like one tramping the wine press and wielding his sword.
>
> About 11:40 p.m. as we stood watching the phenomenon, blood was seen to stream forth from the casket and spread far and wide, apparently 200 miles in extent. Mr. Blue, who is a veteran of the [Civil] war, said it was like the blood of the battlefield, only a deeper red. The warrior seemed at times to be in blood to his knees and above.
>
> At 12:15 I retired, but Mr. Blue remained watching until 2 a.m. and says the warrior was yet parading the skies and was joined by another, who advanced to meet him from the east. The casket vanished after this warrior stepped out. Myself [sic] and Mr. Blue saw the first and second scenes. Others saw part of the second. Mr. Thompson and Mr. Blue saw all the second.

Except for the absence of a UFO, an August 18, 1893, report from Phoenix, Arizona, could pass as a CE3. It is not a typical ghost story, nor—except for the location, a church door—does it seem like a religious vision. The incident was reported in the August 26 issue of the *Arizona Republican*, a still-extant Phoenix newspaper though now known simply as the *Arizona Republic*:

> I was on my way home last Friday [said the unnamed witness] some time, I think, before midnight. . . . I was walking slowly along the east side of Monroe not thinking of anything I now remember and was looking neither to the right nor left. When I came directly in front of the Catholic church I became uneasily aware of a strange presence, though at that moment I saw nothing; I turned involuntarily toward the door of the church and what I saw I'll never forget.
>
> In the archway stood two female figures clad in white; they did'nt [sic] look shadowy as ghosts are supposed to appear but there was a strange plainness of outline[,] luminous and uncanny. I could see the arms distinctly and the feet which seemed to be incased [sic] in white slippers. The hands were almost unnaturally visible. It is probably twenty feet from where I stood to the archway and you know the moon had gone down some hours. It was neither very dark nor very light but I don't think that a substantial object could have been as clearly seen at that distance.
>
> Strangest and most horrible of all, both of the figures were headless and badly scared as I was I remember I thought they resembled those models used in dressmaker's shops.

It seemed to me I stood there half an hour but perhaps it was more nearly half a minute for time you know passes unnaturally slow or fast under certain circumstances. When I collected myself I was standing in the middle of Fourth street. I'm no coward or superstitious fool and I began to reason. I didn't believe I had seen anything but tried to convince myself that either my eyes or my imagination had played a trick on me. I determined to solve the mystery for unless I did I feared that I would carry away with me a permanent belief in ghosts.

I went back with some hesitation to the opening which leads from the sidewalk to the church. There the frightful pair stood, plainer if possible in luminous outline and headlessness than before. I tried to make up my mind to go up to them, and did go to within may be [sic] ten or fifteen feet. I think I remained there two minutes. I remember that on Tuesday before, there had been the ceremonies of the feast of the Assumption, and I thought it might be that there was some midnight ceremony, and that the actors were persons of flesh and blood, but that almost fiery outline of the figures, the missing heads and the still and dark church, were against my theory. I went away without turning my face until I had got half way back to Fourth street. I decided to say nothing about the thing, and never did mention it until last Sunday when I heard that Frank —— had seen something strange in front of the church the next night. I saw him and we compared notes.

He hadn't made as much of an investigation as I did, but he swears he saw for an instant, and might have been longer if he hadn't been in a hurry to leave the neighborhood, two women in white, standing in the archway.

I've gone past the church, on the other side of the street[,] every night since, but I haven't seen any more ghosts.

The *Republican* gave the story straightforward treatment, characterizing both witnesses as credible, while protecting their identities to shelter them from ridicule.

Men in Black

In my research, I have come upon a few stories of black-clad entities, some of which sound like standard ghosts—which are fairly boring in their "real" incarnations, as opposed to their counterparts in horror fiction and film—and others whose precise role in the Goblin Universe is more difficult to quantify. This fascinating Civil War-era report from southeastern Iowa is one of the latter. It overlaps with the long-recorded phenomenon of rock-throwing poltergeists but has its own unique characteristics. In poltergeist cases of this sort, the assailant is invisible. Perhaps it is closer to the phantom-attacker tradition, explanations for which range from the psychological to the paranormal. It is broadly reminiscent of an episode from 1692 in Cape Ann, Massachusetts, when strangers who were said to be impervious to gunfire harassed the citizenry by beating on barns, throwing stones, and otherwise making nuisances of themselves.

Though the word is not used in the account, it is apparent that the victims of the curious attacks were Copperheads, as their enemies called them, or Peace Democrats, as they called themselves. Especially powerful in the Midwest, they opposed both the war (being waged under the hated Republican leadership of President Lincoln) and the abolition of slavery, fearing the latter would lead to a racially equal society. They sought an end to the war on Confederate terms, which made them deeply unpopular among the majority of Union supporters in the North. I provide this background to explain the references in the concluding paragraphs. I found the story in the October 31, 1863, edition of Iowa's *Burlington Weekly Hawk-Eye*, reprinted from an undated though evidently quite recent *Ottumwa Courier*. For purposes of readability I have broken up some maddeningly extended paragraphs.

We learn, by a gentleman of unquestionable veracity, that great consternation prevails in Adams township, in this county, occasioned by the nightly visitations of two seeming men, at the residence of Mr. Wm. Spaulding, who lives fives miles east of Blakesburg. These visitors, be they who they may, and whether in the flesh or spirits in human shape, make their appearance about seven o'clock in the evening, and remain until about five in the morning, their first appearance being on Friday [presumably October 23], a week ago.

They seem medium sized, heavy set men *dressed in black!* [italics and exclamation point in the original]. On their first appearance, on Friday night, the family and some of the neighbors, were boiling molasses about forty rods from the house, when about seven o'clock, suddenly, clubs, cobs, (they had been shelling corn during the day) and small sticks, began to fly in a shower, from a certain direction, occasionally hitting some one of the persons present, but generally falling in one small place. Once a candlestick, held by Mrs. Spaulding, was hit, nearly knocking it out of her hand. No person was then visible, but they heard something walking about with a heavy tread. About one o'clock they quit boiling, and two of the men, Harrison Wellman and J. M. Spaulding, started out in the direction from whence the missiles seemed to come, armed with clubs and brickbats, to find and chastise these strange and curious intruders. No sooner had the men started than the missiles came, larger and thicker. The fire of missiles was returned by the men, but without evidence of their hitting anybody.

The party about the kettles returned about this time (one o'clock) to the house. After their return, the missiles seemed to strike the fence and the house with great violence. Spaulding and one of the men went out to turn out the horses, taking their guns with them. No sooner

were they out of the house then [sic] a large club fell near them, seemingly coming from behind. One of the men wheeled, and saw a man standing near enough to be distinguished in a dark night, at whom he instantly shot. The man ran and disappeared. They turned out the horses and returned to the house.

The next night, and for the four succeeding nights, the same state of things existed, two being seen on Tuesday night. Missiles struck the fence and house, but left no dents and marks distinguishable by daylight. In the meantime, Mr. Spaulding and his neighbors became alarmed by such strange phenomenon [sic], and from time to time, met at Spaulding's house to try and solve the mystery.

On Monday night, J. W. Wellman, Wm. Hayne, Wm. Spaulding and his son, spent the night watching. Sometime in the night, one of the men looked out of the window and distinctly saw, by the light of a bright moon, a man standing before the door. After sitting awhile, they looked out again, and saw the man prostrate on a plank, lighting a dark lantern with a match. Getting their revolvers and guns ready, the party prepared to open the door, but strange to say, the four powerful men could not open it. They afterwards remained quietly in the house until 5 o'clock in the morning. One night, Mr. E. B. Day took his dog, a very sagacious animal, and tried to set her on, but she trembled, ran between her master's legs, and refused to make any more demonstrations against the ghosts.

The above are the leading facts as related to us, of the most strange phenomenon. Mr. Spaulding at first attributed the persecution to political enmity, but certain evidence of the absence, in other places, of those he could only suspect, at times when the visitors were seen and engaged in their operations, satisfied him that he must look for some other solution of the mystery.

We give the facts precisely as they are related to us, merely expressing, by way of comment, our decided conviction that no Union men, in or out of the flesh, have resorted to that mode of converting Mr. Spaulding and his political friends of the error of their political ways. The story is a strange one, and we await, with considerable anxiety, further developments.

Of which, so far as we know at the moment, there were none published. Further research may uncover follow-up information, and if so, I will report it here.

Another entity-in-black episode was covered in detail in a *Philadelphia Press* article, subsequently reprinted in other papers, including the *Atchison Daily Globe* of Kansas (October 31, 1885). It has features in common with 19th-century legends and reports of the elusive Spring Heeled (or Springheel) Jack, sometimes theorized to be a before-his-time UFO being, elsewhere held to be no more than a folkloric concoction cobbled together from various ghost traditions. In any event, some alleged sighters said that Jack appeared on closer observation to resemble a woman in man's clothing—something that was also said of the controversial "mad gasser of Mattoon," an Illinois phantom from the late summer of 1944.

The episode began, according to the *Press* story, with sightings of an apparitional figure by trainmen and others near the East Moorestown station in New Jersey. On one occasion startled members of a train crew thought they had hit someone walking along the track, only to find no trace of the ostensible victim. The *Press* then related:

Ignorant of this affair, Mrs. Cassidy, an intelligent lady of Moorestown, and her sister, walked over the track at this point a few nights after. She said yesterday: "We were walking slowly along, and I was never thinking of ghosts. I suddenly cast my eyes to the right and cried out: 'Oh, my! Look there. What is that?' and my blood stopped in my veins and I was paralyzed with fear, for right in front of me stood a tall, thin figure, dressed in black, with a crape veil over its face. It could not have come in that door there and must have been nearly seven feet tall. My sister said: 'Oh, that is some widow,' but it suddenly whirled away with a whizzing noise like pheasants make when they rise and fly away. Then my sister was frightened and we both went down town. I met my brother and told him all about it. He said we were cowards, but came back with us to the place we saw the ghost. It was quite light, as the moon was just breaking, through the clouds.

"When we arrived at the place my brother saw it, too, and started to run after it, but it suddenly vanished. It did not seem to have any feet, and, though I don't believe in ghosts, it was the queerest looking thing I ever saw."

Tom Cassidy, Louis Certain, Tom Morany and William Budd, four incredulous citizens, concluded to ferret out the mystery and bravely face the foe.

Friday night, after coming from their work on the railroad, they visited the haunted spot, determined to shoot the rascal who would perpetrate such a humbug on the community.

Tom Cassidy described their meeting with the ghost thus:

"We were walking along the road, not thinking of the thing just then, when a tall, thin form, too large to be a man, stood in front of us. It was dressed in woman's clothes and its face was craped. It wore something on its legs that looked like gum boots and its tall form swayed to and fro, like the boughs of trees when the wind blows through them, and made a similar noise. Louis Certain yelled out: 'My God, what is that ghost?' Then Bill Budd drew a revolver, and he ran a square following it. He could not get nearer than ten yards to it, and when he thought he was gaining on it[,] it suddenly disappeared in the woods. The strangest part of the affair was that the ghost ran along the sandy road and when we afterward examined the road not a track or trace of one could be found."

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William Budd said: "I am a very fast runner, but I couldn't keep up to that thing. I don't believe it is human, for it does not run like a man. I wanted to fire at it when it ran away from me, but the other fellows told me not to shoot, and then when I was going to draw the infernal thing disappeared. I never did believe in ghosts, but that is one."

One man said: "John Dargan's horse saw it on the road, near Gillingham's house, on Thursday night, and frightened at it. People say that they can not get a horse in Gillingham's stable on account of it. Their house is empty and some think it stays there." Isaac Lawrence said he saw it come out of Gillingham's yard and it looked like a man seven feet tall. He passed it and it disappeared; but he was certain it was not a human being.

The ghost has been seen at various times by different people along the track, and all bear testimony to its great size, its somber appearance and the whizzing noise it makes as it sails along. Large crowds have congregated to see the mystery, but it generally appears when only three or four are present.

Some of the citizens say that just two years ago a similar apparition clothed in white was seen at the same place. It manifested itself to a great many in the community, and some think it but a reappearance of the old ghost, clothed in black.

Such enigma variations comprise the proto-UFO phenomenon of the pre-UFO age. They confront us with new and challenging questions which, at least at the moment, appear to confuse more than to clarify. It is my instinctive feeling, however, that potentially they will accomplish the latter and diminish the former, if, by nothing else, discouraging untenable overarching theories about anomalous phenomena. Meantime, we walk carefully through a mind field of ambiguity, complexity, and—let's admit it—good, old-fashioned wonder. ✦

Letters

Is art influencing reality?

To the editor:

I enjoyed Kevin Randle and Karl Pflock's article (*IUR,* Spring 2003, pp. 15–18, 24–25) about Barney Barnett potentially being exposed to UFO crash stories in print (dating back to 1949) that could have influenced his telling a tale of encountering a crashed saucer outside of Soccoro, New Mexico, in 1947. Although stories of crashed or disabled saucers have become a major subgenre of UFO lore in the post-Roswell era and may themselves be the result of exposure to the original Roswell story, there is another common component of UFO encounter descriptions that also may be influenced by pop culture.

In numerous UFO sightings, witnesses have reported electromagnetic effects. These EM effects take the form of power failures, stalled machinery (especially cars), and a feel of static electricity in the air. Though Don Burleson wrote in his article on the Levelland case (*IUR,* Spring 2003, pp. 3–6, 25) that EM effects in conjunction with UFO sightings were "virtually unheard of" in 1957, this is not quite true. Three years earlier in 1953, George Pal's film adaptation of *War of the Worlds* was released. When the alien invaders first reveal themselves and activate their death ray on hapless movie extras, the film segues to a sequence in which the nearest town begins to experience EM effects from alien technology. The main character's battery-operated watch stops working, another's hearing aid goes dead, and the lights at the town's social hall black out (not unlike the central Indiana power grid in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*).

Predating even *War of the Worlds,* Robert Wise's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) offered another example of extraterrestrial EM interference when alien Klaatu shut down all electrical power. Pop culture was showing the 1950s movie-going public that EM disturbances go with the territory of seeing a UFO. Given the widespread exposure of these films, it's logical to conclude that sighting claimants may include EM effects in their sighting descriptions so that their reported event fits the mold of what pop culture tells them should occur when seeing an unknown aerial object.

Of course, if EM effects and aerial phenomena can be scientifically recorded and linked, we'll have to ask ourselves: Is Hollywood influencing the public into seeing car-stalling UFOs, or is Hollywood being influenced by real encounters whose details make their way into films?

Jim Jamrus
Mokena, Illinois

Barnett reevaluated

To the editor:

I have been working on the Plains of San Agustin crash scenario since 1995, and I have just returned from Henderson, Nevada, where I presented my findings to the UFO Crash Retrievals conference.

I read with interest your Spring 2003 article entitled, "Barney Barnett's Crashed Saucer:Where Did It Come From?" by Kevin Randle and Kart Pflock. The authors are quite right about Barnett's military background in WWI, but I might add that Barnett went into the army on December 21, 1917, as a recruit and was able to rise to the rank of captain in 18 months before his discharge in 1919.

Barney Barnett, ca. 1922

Barnett's previous college education began at a local school, Goodnight Baptist College, where he was captain of the football team in 1911. He then attended Humboldt College in Humboldt, Iowa, where he was a top student. He graduated in 1914 as class valedictorian with a bachelor of science degree. He then continued his education at Oakland (Calif.) Polytechnic College, finishing in 1916.

Randle and Pflock speculate on where he might have gotten his idea for a crashed saucer story. Barnett was thinking about life on other planets before most of our fathers and grandfathers were born.

He had a lifelong interest in astronomy and subscribed to a magazine published by the Hayden Planetarium, called *The Sky Magazine of Cosmic News*. In a 1939 issue, his name was mentioned in connection with a metal detector he invented which had located 27 meteorites at the Odessa Crater site in Texas.

Barnett's Plains story stands on its own. He was a quiet, unassuming man certainly not prone to cherish fiction and pass it on to his friends. His story, for those who care to study it, is sincere, consistent, and lifelong. He died on April 11, 1969, of bronchopneumonia, at the age of 77.

As to Barnett getting his story from 1950 vintage magazines, he did not need to. He had his own experience in early July 1947. Subsequently, he told a few people closest to him. As to Barnett's "puzzle piece finding its way into the wrong box," it was actually put there by early Roswell writers, including Randle. Perhaps it is time to stop moving Barnett around to accommodate other scenarios and begin to take seriously this honest man's very credible story of a flying saucer crash on the Plains of San Augustin.

Art Campbell
Medford, Oregon

✦